

THE CONCORD SAUNTERER



*To we saunter toward the Holyland;
Till one day the sun shall shine more
brightly than ever he has done, shall
perchance shine into our minds and
hearts, and light up our whole lives
with a great awakening light, so warm
and serene and golden as on a
bank-side in Autumn.*

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THE CONCORD SAUNTERER

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RAPPING WITH THE THOREAUS

by Thomas Blanding

Step into this scene at Widow Wilder's boarding house on Sacramento Street in Cambridge early in 1852: Seated round a table are Henry Thoreau's aunts Maria and Jane with their long-time friends Prudence Ward and Mary Wilder and a stranger or two. Aunt Maria is the dominating personality, brisk, brusk, decked out in a bright brown wig and a blond lace cap tied tightly with purple ribbons under her determined chin. Her sister Jane is more counterpoise



Maria Thoreau



Jane Thoreau

than counterpart, as pious and placid as Maria is opinionated and outspoken; spectacled and desperately deaf, with a sweet voice employed chiefly to pacify the reproaches rattling from Maria's two full rows of artificial teeth. Miss Ward, their correspondent and confidante, knows the Thoreau family as well as anyone, having boarded in their Concord homes for more than a decade. Prudence is all her name implies: commonsensical, good-natured, and right-minded; a friend of the slave, a good botanizer, a delicate watercolorist, in short, a great influence who affected the Thoreau

children on all these counts of character and concernment. Mrs. Wilder is as smart and personable as she was two decades ago when her husband John ministered to the tender souls of Prudence, Maria, and Jane at the orthodox Trinitarian Church in Concord. Now they are ladies of latter years, spinsters and widow in their fifties and sixties, with tales to tell and tongues to tattle them. Attend their table talk, chatting and rapping as the spirit moves.



Prudence Ward

Some say the spirit might even move the table. For the "rapping" referred to is not the dialogue of the living but the epidemic "Rochester Rappings," the alleged manifestations of departed spirits through knocks and tilts, as Edward Emerson said, "of hitherto sober tables." These communications occur at an occult ceremony through a medium, a psychic sensitive, who serves as seer for the deceased. The Thoreaus and their friends are seated at a seance!

The rapping rage had begun in 1848 near Rochester, New York, when two teenage sisters, Maggie and Kate Fox, received intelligence from spirits in the form of coded furniture knockings which spelled out messages. Gradually the spirits became more aggressive and within a few years tables were turning full tilt in almost all the eastern states. Here at last was physical proof that individuals lived on in a glorious hereafter from which they kept up an active interest in this world. Never mind that the same soon showed that fraud and trickery were at the bottom of these communications from "Spirit-Land." (The Fox sisters later confessed and demonstrated publicly that they had produced the "knockings" by cracking their joints.) The phenomenon spawned a new religion called by its multitudes Spiritualism. Ralph Waldo Emerson called it "the rat and mouse revelation."

The revelation reached Concord in 1852 but without any force. Its chief apostles, according to Emerson's son, "were Mr. X, a pocketbook-maker of no other distinction, his virtuous but tartly prosaic sister, an anæmic dress-maker and a rude Irish servant-girl who turned her table-moving to account in 'spring cleaning.'" Judge Ebenezer Rockwood Hoar pronounced, "If this be treasure, verily we have it in earthen vessels." But some locals were duped. Dr. Dillingham had the spiritual knockers at his home. One lonely old man on Ponkatasset Hill, recently bereft of wife and children, squandered his money on a Boston medium who brought him the longed for communications. His cottage and garden fell into disrepair and his estate was ruined in this world.

Interestingly, the Transcendentalists, spiritual seekers all, disdained these revelations. "Mediums--spiritualists,--are Vampyres," Emerson said; nor was this his last word:

These adepts have mistaken flatulency for inspiration.
Were this drivel which they report as the voice of spirits
really such, we must find out a more decisive suicide. I
say to the table-rappers:--

"I will believe
Thou wilt not utter what thou dost not know,
And so far I trust thee, gentle Kate."

They are ignorant of all that is healthy and useful to know,
and by laws of kind,--dunces seeking dunces in the dark of
what they call the spiritual world,--preferring snores and
gastric noises to the voice of any muse. I think the rap-
pings a new test, like blue litmus or other chemical
absorbent, to try catechisms with.

Nathaniel Hawthorne, while never an Emersonian, was this time in that camp, even if his wife and daughter were not:

Do I believe in these wonders? Of course; for how is it possible to doubt either the solemn word or the sober observation of a learned and sensible man like Dr. Wilkinson? But again, do I really believe it? Of course not; for I cannot consent to let Heaven and Earth, this world and the next, be beaten up together like the white and yolk of an egg.

Bronson Alcott held out hope that Spiritualism might be preparing the way for a positive faith, that "whatever may be its vagaries and absurdities, it must answer to something real in the human heart if it fail to commend itself in important particulars to the head," but it was, he concluded, largely lunacy and a "case of Mr. Feeble-Mind":

This apotheosis of idiocy and fatuity only serves to betray the latent atheism and dark superstition of multitudes in our time, and the need of some spiritual discernment and culture to detect and banish these grim goblin gods here enthroned from the vacant popular mind. Yet the ghastly superstition is spreading fast and wide, and is to have its victims and its day. Nor need we wonder in the least at this calamity when we consider the superficial, not to say no-teaching of the multitude in the elements of metaphysics and of the spiritual life. The oracles are dumb; and if any proof need be cited in confirmation of the shallow infidelity and the current stupidity, it is to be found in the calling of this direst of all materialism of any people or time by the fair name "Spiritualism," and a "philosophy" besides.

This goes to the heart of Emerson's criticism of "this shallow Americanism which hopes to get rich by credit, to get knowledge by raps on midnight tables." It is not the possibilities of the other world but the pretensions of this one which Emerson does not accept:

It is not the incredibility of the fact, but a certain want of harmony between the action and the agents. We are used to vaster wonders than these that are alleged. In the hands of poets, of devout and simple minds, nothing in the line of their character and genius would surprise us. But we should look for the style of the great artist of it, look for completeness and harmony. Nature never works like a conjuror, to surprise, rarely by shocks, but by infinite graduation.

Yet, even as Emerson and Alcott were shaking their heads over the rappings, their young admirer, Thomas Wentworth Higginson, was seeking career advice at a seance in Boston and defending the rights of mediums to practice their art at the Harvard Divinity School.

And away in that same Cambridge, as lights and wits are dimmed, Thoreau's aunts sit down to rap with spirits. What would their nephew have said, secreted behind the medium's screen? We can easily suppose from some remarks he made in his letters and Journal, and we introduce them below as commentary on the account of the seance Prudence Ward sent to her niece Mary down on the farm in Spencer.*

Some time since, I spent a few days at Mrs Wilder's to enjoy my friends the T[horeau]'s society-- They were boarding there for a time but have now returned to Concord-- While there, much talk was heard about the "knockings"--& having opportunity the day of my return--we went to an exhibition of the kind--& came away as wise as we went.

Concord is just as idiotic as ever in relation to the spirits and their knockings. Most people here believe in a spiritual world which no respectable junk bottle which had not met with a slip--would condescend to contain even a portion of for a moment--whose atmosphere would extinguish a candle let down into it, like a well that wants airing--in spirits which the very bull frogs in our meadows would blackball.

The "mediums" appeared sincere & the answers could'nt have been made by them. The whole thing at first appeared to me silly, & afterward amusing--

What if the lover should learn that his beloved dealt in incantations and philters! What if he should hear that she consulted a clairvoyant! The spell would be instantly broken.

The manner was this, we sat round a table, & the medium would enquire if such a spirit were here & would be willing to answer--when quick little faint taps were heard--as if from the table[,] then one took an alphabet & pointing at the letters one by one, in regular course or otherwise--presently a rap tap was heard, this letter was written down on a paper with a pencil, & then the same course gone over-- 'till the word or sentence was spelled out--

*Prudence Ward, Cohasset, Mass., to Mary S. Ward, Spencer, Mass., February 16, 1852, Ward Family Letters, Thoreau Society Archives, Concord Free Public Library. These Ward Family Letters, including some three hundred manuscripts, were presented to the Thoreau Lyceum in 1980 by Miss Jane Dunham and Mrs. William Priestley. They are being edited by Thomas Blanding for a work entitled The Thoreau Family Circle.

It is not necessary for them to take ether, who in their sane and waking hours are ever translated by a thought; nor for them to see with their hindheads, who sometimes see from their foreheads; nor listen to the spiritual knockings, who attend to the intimations of reason and conscience.

Some of us enquired who were our guardian angels, for 'tis the belief [of] knockers & their friends that every one has two--& such answers were received--as "grandfather["] "mother" "aunt" &c

What an ordeal it were to make men pass through, to consider how many ever put to you a vital question! Their knowledge of something better gets no further than what is called religion and spiritual knockings.

Maria asked what her mother's name was, & tho' there was a little hesitancy--once or twice--the name was spelt out "Jenny Burns"--

Mr. Buffum says that in 1817 or 1819 he saw the sea-serpent at Swampscott. . . . Buffum is about sixty, and it should be said, as affecting the value of his evidence, that he is a firm believer in Spiritualism.

In the midst of the questioning, came a loud--rumbling knock, quite different from the rest, which the "medium" seemed to be well acquainted with & which he said was from "Edward Oscutt" & that he was sent by his sister who was a powerful medium, but an excentric woman, & that he came to disturb them & this he allowed was strange as it was said, there were no bad spirits & he thought this mischief making, was something like evil--

Their evil genius is seeing how low it can degrade them. The hooting of owls--the croaking of frogs--is celestial wisdom in comparison.

We enquired if the table was ever moved, & requested it might be. Soon after, it moved about, in quite a satisfactory manner-- Afterward, by request, it moved again, but then it trundled, or rushed towards one of the mediums-- On the whole we were glad we went. We didn't expect to clear up what had puzzled so many--

If I could be brought to believe in the things which they believe--I should make haste to get rid of my certificate of stock in this & the next world's enterprises, and buy a share in the first Immediate Annihilation Company that offered--I would exchange my immortality for a glass of small beer this hot weather.

Maria wrote me that some of Mrs W[ilder]'s boarders came in that very afternoon & stayed several hours-- Then when alone they examined the table thoroughly, but could find nothing-- They afterward went to

East Boston & the table tipped so, that one of them seized hold of the fluid lamp, lest it should fall, when there was such a tremendous knocking that he put it down, & there it stood firmly fixed to the table while the fluid swayed back & forth. At one place, hearing a voice they looked up & there were the shells on the mantle piece moving about!--

Where are the heathen? Was there ever any superstition before? And yet I suppose there may be a vessel this very moment setting sail from the coast of North America to that of Africa with a missionary on board!

Of course it will take a great deal more evidence than we have witnessed to make us believe that the spirits of our departed friends are engaged in such trumpety communications--but then it is quite difficult to explain--for I couldn't see how the mediums, or indeed a third party, could possibly tell at which letter we pointed--& this was necessary to know, even if the answer were wrong--because it was always a connected sentence, & sometimes when we were talking, we didn't all hear the raps & then we would go over it again to make certain, & the rap would be sure to come at the same letter. The "spirits", could certainly hear--for when a word was partly written & we knew what it must be, we would speak it, & there would be an immediate response.-- -- --

Consider the dawn & the sun rise--the rain bow & the evening,--the words of Christ & the aspirations of all the saints! Hear music? See--smell--taste--feel--hear--anything--& then hear these idiots inspired by the cracking of a restless board--humbly asking "Please spirit, if you cannot answer by knocks, answer by tips of the table."!!!!!!

THOREAU'S A WEEK ON THE CONCORD AND MERRIMACK RIVERS
AND MARGARET FULLER'S "GOOD WEEK"

by Thomas Blanding

The publication of the first two volumes in Robert Hudspeth's admirable edition of The Letters of Margaret Fuller brings to the fore again Margaret's curious and controversial postscript in a letter to Henry Thoreau, October 18, 1841:

The pencilled paper Mr E[merson]. put into my hands. I have taken the liberty to copy it You expressed one day my own opinion that the moment such a crisis is passed we may speak of it. There is no need of artificial delicacy, of secrecy, it keeps its own secret; it cannot be made false. Thus you will not be sorry that I have seen the paper. Will you not send me some other records of the good week.



MARGARET FULLER
(MARCHIONESS OSSOLI)

Ever since Sanborn first published this provocative passage in his Henry D. Thoreau in 1882, biographers, editors, and critics have beavered away at its meaning. All assume that the "pencilled paper" relates to Thoreau's first book, A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers, the "good week" mentioned by Margaret, and cite this letter as sure evidence that Thoreau was working on the book eight years before its publication. Henry S. Canby, in his Thoreau (1939), spurs the common judgment when he writes that the postscript reference "can only be [to] John and Henry's week on the rivers," and conjectures further that Margaret was soliciting "records" of the excursion for the Dial. In a note Canby stretches his point even further:

The manuscript of the 'Week' was already in the works, . . . Margaret may very well have seen some draft of the later chapters, which do contain various references needing explanation by the author if he had submitted, as apparently he did, something about the 'good week' to his friends.

When Walter Harding and Carl Bode re-edited Margaret's letter in The Correspondence of Henry David Thoreau (1958), they stated flatly: "The 'good week' indicates that he was already working on his first book." (Ironically, the editors mis-transcribe the manuscript, as Sanborn and Hudspeeth do not, omitting Fuller's underlining of "good week" and thereby undermining their strongest textual evidence that Fuller might be referring to a book.) Harding, in his Introduction to the Rinehart Edition of A Week (1963), converts Canby's conjecture into fact: "By October 18, 1841, his general purpose was widely enough known that Margaret Fuller wrote asking him to submit 'records of the good week' for possible publication in the Transcendentalist Dial which she then edited."

Upon this establishment an edifice is built. Allen Beecher Hovey, in The Hidden Thoreau (1966), thinks there is much hidden meaning in Thoreau's pencilled paper:

I suggest that the secrecy pertained to Miss Fuller's reference to "the good week" (Thoreau's projected

book). Thoreau had realized something unusual about his journey of 1839 and the "pencilled paper" given to Emerson contained a notation about this realization. He obviously considered the paper secretive for it held the rough sketch of his book's underlying theme.

Richard Lebeaux, in Young Man Thoreau (1977), surmises, somewhat more circumspectly, that Margaret's remarks "indicate that Henry has already begun to work on his account of the 'good week' on the rivers. Whether he then conceived his accounts as a potential book we do not know."

So way leads on to way until we come to these opinions in the Princeton Edition of A Week (1980): That Fuller's "closing words 'good week' appear to be a direct reference to Thoreau's nascent book about the river journey"; that Thoreau's pencilled paper "seems to have been an autobiographical fragment"; that "the 'records of the good week' might well refer to a different document, possibly to passages Thoreau had drafted in his 1840 Journal and then recopied in one of his transcript volumes"; and that "Fuller's letter suggests that the project was uppermost in his mind that fall."

This latest authority leads Hudspeth to cite the Princeton Edition chapter and verse in his own gloss of the postscript: "Emerson had given Fuller either Thoreau's autobiographical sketch or a journal fragment, for the reference clearly is to Thoreau's first book, one he was then planning."

But not so clearly after all. Fuller's reference to the "good week" is almost certainly not to Henry and his brother John's 1839 voyage on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers nor to Henry's nascent book on that subject. In the first place, their trip took two weeks and was not compressed with literary license into one for several years yet. In the second place, in 1840 and 1841 Thoreau was not treating his account as a book but rather as a lecture or essay, first entitled "Memoirs of a Tour--A Chit-chat With Nature," more recently (and fortunately) "Merrimack & Musketaquid." Not till after John died some three months after Fuller wrote her letter did Henry conceive an expanded account of the brothers' pilgrimage to the mountains. Between 1842 and 1845 Thoreau did write Journal entries toward his book, but, as Linck Johnson convincingly shows in his doctoral dissertation, Thoreau did not begin writing his first draft of A Week until 1845. In the third place, one need follow the current back but ten days, not two years, from the date of Fuller's letter to find the source of her reference to the "good week."

On Saturday, October 2, 1841, Margaret Fuller, then living in Jamaica Plain, visited Concord as a guest of the Emersons. She remained under their roof until the following Friday or Saturday, October 8 or 9, whence she went to Boston and a few days later home to Jamaica Plain. During her week at Concord, Fuller and Emerson, by Emerson's own account, exchanged notes "from room to room." According to Ralph Rusk, the editor of Emerson's letters, their notes "revived at this time the old debate . . . regarding the imperfections of their friendship." Already ensconced at

Emerson's since April, in a little room at the head of the stairs, was Henry Thoreau. Margaret's reference to the "pencilled paper" Emerson put into her hands suggests that Henry too took part in this game of transcendental post office. Whatever Thoreau wrote, whatever the great reckoning in that little room, it seems clear that Margaret's allusion to the "good week" refers not to A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers but to her good week as the Emersons' guest in Concord.

Thus, in the closing words of Thoreau's Journal: "All this is perfectly distinct to an observant eye, and yet could easily pass unnoticed by most. Thus each wind is self-registering."

EDWARD S. HOAR REVEALED

by Ray Angelo

Edward Hoar, Thoreau's retiring companion, has aroused the curiosity of Thoreauvians for nearly a century. Dr. Samuel Jones, a Thoreau enthusiast of the last century, twice requested Concordian Alfred W. Hosmer to secure him a picture of Hoar. Hosmer, an amateur photographer who was so successful in finding and copying pictures of Thoreau, his family, and friends, was unable to fulfill Jones's request.

Where Jones and Hosmer failed, however, another of Thoreau's early admirers succeeded. Walter Deane (1848-1930), a respected amateur botanist and avid collector of photos and autographs of botanists, secured a photo of Hoar taken in 1885 when he was sixty-one. This has come to light among the Deane papers at Harvard's Gray Herbarium Library which also contain two letters by Thoreau and letters to Deane from Thoreau's friends H.G.O. Blake, Marston Watson, and Edward Hoar.¹ Published here for the first time, with the generous permission of the Gray Herbarium of Harvard University, is the Deane photograph of Edward Hoar. This is apparently the only published picture of Mr. Hoar.

Relatively little biographical information exists about Edward Sherman Hoar (December 22, 1823 to February 22, 1893). This is partly because, during his lifetime, he was outshone by two relatively famous brothers--Ebenezer Rockwood Hoar (1816-1895), Attorney General in the Grant administration and Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court Judge, and George Frisbie Hoar (1826-1904), a United States Senator from Massachusetts for nearly thirty years. It is also apparent that Edward Hoar was the sort of man who avoided drawing attention to himself.

Edward Hoar was born in Concord, Massachusetts, the son of Samuel and Sarah Sherman Hoar. The Hoar family figures early in Concord history. Daniel Hoar is listed in Concord's petition of 1664 pledging to assist in maintaining the charter of the Massachusetts Colony. Squire Samuel Hoar (1778-1856) settled in

Concord as a lawyer in 1807 and became the town's foremost citizen, practicing his profession for forty-nine years until his death. He represented his community in both branches of the state legislature and his state in the United States Congress. Sarah Sherman (1783-1866) was the daughter of Roger Sherman of New Haven, Connecticut, a signer of the Declaration of Independence.

Edward was the fourth of five children, one of whom, Samuel J. Hoar, died in infancy. In addition to Edward's two noted brothers were two older sisters, Elizabeth Sherman Hoar (1814-1878) and Sarah Sherman Storer (1817-1907). Elizabeth was a talented and learned woman whose engagement to Ralph Waldo Emerson's brother Charles ended tragically with his death in 1836.



EDWARD SHERMAN HOAR

Spring 1885

(Courtesy of the Gray Herbarium Library, Harvard University)

Almost nothing is known about Edward's boyhood. In early 1840, to the distress of his family, he ran off to the West with another boy named Worthington who was thought to be bad company. Edward returned, however, to attend Harvard. In April 1844, during Hoar's senior year, he and Thoreau accidentally set fire to the Fairhaven woods in Concord while cooking some fish. It is thought that Hoar's family connections saved Thoreau from legal action. Edward graduated from Harvard in August 1844.

Edward entered Harvard Law School but soon left for New York to study and practice law. He was admitted to the New York bar in 1848. The 1849 Gold Rush swept him to California. There he opened a law office and soon became recognized for his ability, serving as a district attorney. Afterwards, he was a planter in Santa Barbara. While at the West he traveled some and was visiting Peru when his father died in 1856. He returned to Concord in January 1857 to help run the Hoar household and to assist Elizabeth with their aging mother. His stay in the West had earned him the nickname "The Californian" among his Concord friends. In the summer of 1857 Hoar accompanied Thoreau on the last of Henry's Maine journeys. Hoar is memorialized in Thoreau's The Maine Woods by the account of their going astray at Mud Pond Carry. The tenderness of Hoar's feet resulting from this incident prevented Thoreau from revisiting Mt. Katahdin and using his new botanical prowess there. From Thoreau we learn that Hoar was near-sighted and smoked a pipe.

In June 1858 Emerson proposed to James Russell Lowell that Edward Hoar become a member of a party that was to visit the Adirondacks--a suggestion based on Hoar's abilities as a naturalist and botanist.² Emerson expressed the fear that Hoar might wander back to the Pacific. Edward did not participate in that excursion but that summer he did join Thoreau on his ascent of New England's highest peak, Mt. Washington, in New Hampshire. Thoreau appreciated Hoar's enthusiasm for and knowledge of natural history (which approached his own) and must have appreciated Hoar's assumption of the entire expense for their horse and wagon.

Hoar's wanderlust turned toward the east in the fall of 1858. On October 6 he sailed with his sister Elizabeth and a next-door neighbor for a tour of Europe. On December 28 in Florence, Italy, Edward married the neighbor, Elizabeth Hallett Prichard (1822-1917), a teacher and native Concordian. It is not known whether Edward and Elizabeth Prichard, before leaving Concord, had decided to marry. After a brief honeymoon the newlyweds joined sister Elizabeth in her furnished apartment in Rome on the Corso to spend the winter and spring. The Hawthornes were also in Rome at this time. Edward, his sister, and his pregnant wife set sail for home from Liverpool on August 27, 1859.

Upon returning from their tour, the couple bought a farm in Lincoln, Massachusetts. Their only child, Florence, was born in Concord in January 1860--her name honoring the site of their marriage. In 1865 Emerson was again recommending that Hoar be included in a field trip because of his abilities and "strong taste for wild life."³ This time it was a scientific expedition to South America headed by Louis Agassiz. When the party left, however, it included young William James but not Edward Hoar.

Some time after the death of Edward's mother in 1866 the small family moved back to Concord and lived with sister Elizabeth. Edward's rheumatism prompted him to consider residence in a warmer climate. The farm in Lincoln was sold in 1871. Within a year the family established a home in Palermo, Sicily, where Edward cultivated oranges, lemons, and figs. His sister Elizabeth spent the winter of 1872-73 with them. According to his brother E. Rockwood, however, "they found the climatic perfection outweighed by the imminence of assassination."⁴ Edward Hoar and his family returned to Concord in June 1873, living again with Elizabeth in their father's house on Main Street.

Edward's sister Elizabeth died in 1878. At that time Edward renounced the practice of law and thereafter devoted all his time to his books and nature studies. He declined invitations to lecture at various New England colleges. His scientific acumen attracted the friendships of Louis Agassiz, ornithologist William Brewster, and botanist Walter Deane.

Two of the more interesting letters from Hoar to Deane (preserved at Harvard's Gray Herbarium Library and published here for the first time with permission) reveal Hoar's enthusiasm for botany:

Concord July 31st 1886

Dear Mr. Deane,

I shall be rejoiced to see you, either alone or in company with any botanist of your acquaintance on any day next week after Monday that you will name & hold myself ready to row you up or down the river in my boat as long as the daylight will serve. I would like however a line or telegram appointing the day so that I may not be out of the way.

Since your departure, I met Mr. Blake⁵ of Worcester, Mr. Thoreau's literary executor, & he gave me a signature⁶ to a letter addressed to him which I have subject to your order. He said he had given away most of his private signatures & scraps addressed to himself, but did not feel at liberty to give away writings entrusted to him by Mr. T's family, but if he finds any botanical fragment he will send it to you.⁷

I find that the tall *Scirpus* along the river bank is *S. eriophorum*,⁸ the commonest, and you remember a long submerged dark green filiform plant that embarrassed our oars a good deal & you wondered what it might be. Since you went it has put its head above water & blossomed on the North Branch⁹ and turns out to be *Scirpus subterminalis*!¹⁰ I have pressed a lot of it if you want it. But I presume you have it.

Mr. Brewster¹¹ & Mr. Purdy¹² are going up to Fairhaven tomorrow evening to hear the hermit thrush & he has been so good as to invite me & we mean to visit a bog¹³ where flourish *Ledum latifolium*¹⁴ & *Kalmia glauca*¹⁵ & the black spruce.

Very truly yours

Concord September 12th 1886

Dear Mr. Deane,

I suppose the reason of the absence of *Juncus militaris*¹⁶ from Mr. Thoreau's Herbarium may have been that he had begun to study the Juncaceae¹⁷ & Cyperaceae¹⁸ & grasses very shortly before his death and they were rolled up in bundles of old newspapers with pencilled provisional names and it is possible that his sister who gave them to me at his request may have overlooked some small package. He seems to have been very diligent in collecting every variation of form, however slight, but as you observed he committed the error of getting most of them & of the *Carices*,¹⁹ too young. The *J. militaris* was certainly not in his herbarium as I received it. Almost every other Concord & alpine form is there, & one or two sea side forms.

I took a walk the other day to Bateman's Pond in the north part of Concord & found there *Juncus longicaudatus*,²⁰ *Utricularia gibba*,²¹ *Potamogeton hybridum*,²² the striped maple or moosewood, *Viburnum acerifolium*²³ & (probably placed there by Mr. Pratt²⁴) *Sabbatia stellaris*,²⁵ and coming home found a little horse pond covered with *Brasenia peltata*,²⁶ likewise the Canada plum I found, rare in Concord. Miss Martha Bartlett²⁷ sent me a leaf of *Nelumbium luteum*²⁸ gathered this year in Concord River. I envy you your day with Mr. Morong;²⁹ & apropos of your suite of *Potamogetons*,³⁰ perhaps you can [tell] me the name of the enclosed which differs from any I have found in the River but although quite abundant has neither emerged floating leaves nor fruit. It is reticulated more obliquely than *P. claytoni*.³¹ Is it *P. gramineus* var. *graminifolius*?³² It grows four or five feet long on sandy bottom of Assabet.

I am possessed with a longing to go up next spring to the great *Rhododendron maximum*³³ swamp at the foot of *Monadnoc*³⁴ with you & Mr. Brewster & hear the winter wren sing. Perhaps this is too idyllic an ambition ever to be gratified in this wicked world. But there is all winter to consider of it. Please say to Mrs. Deane that my wife joins me in wishing to be remembered.

Very sincerely yours

Edward S. Hoar

Undoubtedly Hoar's most significant contribution to science is the collection of plants that was presented to the New England Botanical Club in 1912 by his daughter Florence (Mrs. Moses B. L. Bradford). These consisted of about 1,000 specimens, among which were nearly 100 specimens of grasses and sedges collected by Thoreau (referred to in Hoar's September 12, 1886, letter above). Hoar's own collecting was strongest in the grasses and sedges, difficult groups even from a modern standpoint. The care with which he

provided the data for his collections is in striking contrast to the brief, cryptic scrawls that accompany Thoreau's specimens. Interestingly, the dates on Hoar's specimens are clustered about the late 1850s and the late 1880s as if his botanical enthusiasm began with his interaction with Thoreau upon Hoar's return from California, subsided with the death of his friend in 1862, then briefly rekindled with the new friendship with Walter Deane.

Following the tradition of his family, Hoar was in sympathy with the progressive movements of his time, but, in keeping with his personality, shied away from public life. His brother, E. Rockwood, affirmed this retiring nature in a conversation with Oliver Wendell Holmes at the Saturday Club. When Dr. Holmes was maintaining that all people worth anything came to the surface and were known as such, Rockwood replied: "I don't agree with you. I've a dear brother at home, who is worth a dozen of me, whom nobody knows."³⁵ Rockwood elsewhere characterized his brother as one whose knowledge of books and "refined nature, kindly though sensitive and shy, made him a charming companion to the few who had the privilege of knowing him."³⁶ Curiously, Edward's other distinguished brother, George Frisbie Hoar, in his two-volume autobiography, fails to mention Edward by name or include him in the index.³⁷

In November, 1892, Hoar wrote to his friend, Edward S. Burgess,³⁸ in Washington, D.C., to request assistance in finding quarters there. Hoar's physician had advised that he "should pass the winter in a milder and less malarious region than our Concord meadows."³⁹ Early in 1893 he took up temporary residence in Washington, D.C., where he shared with Mr. Burgess some reminiscences of Concord friends. Burgess, realizing the value of Hoar's conversations, took notes.⁴⁰

Hoar's recollections of Thoreau are among the most interesting recorded by Burgess, particularly since Edward Hoar today is remembered primarily for his association with Thoreau. Hoar's affection is revealed by the loan of a horse and carriage to Thoreau when the latter's health deteriorated during his last illness. In spite of this, Edward admitted to Burgess that he greatly regretted not knowing Thoreau better. While remarking that he and Thoreau often went out together, Hoar pointed out that he was shown only the natural history side of Thoreau and was wholly unaware at the time of the moral side that appeared in Thoreau's books. Hoar also mentioned that Thoreau persuaded him not to become an ornithologist by emphasizing observations of how birds live and behave rather than the collection of specimens--in spite of Hoar's ability to hit a bird on the wing at 200 yards.

The lung disease from which Hoar had suffered in 1892 did not improve. He died in Washington on February 22, 1893. His body was laid to rest in Sleepy Hollow Cemetery near his father, mother, and siblings. There is no more fitting summary of the man than the inscription written by his brother, George Frisbie Hoar, that adorns his gravestone:

He cared nothing for the wealth or fame his rare genius might easily have won. But his ear knew the songs of all birds. His eye saw the beauty of flowers and the secret of their life. His unerring taste delighted in what was best in books. So his pure and quiet days reaped their rich harvest of wisdom and content.

Acknowledgments

I wish to thank Mrs. Elizabeth Maxfield-Miller for generous assistance and use of her research relating to Elizabeth Hoar and the Hoar family. I am also grateful for the assistance of Marcia Moss and Joyce Woodman, and the use of manuscript letters and notes, at the Concord Free Public Library. Finally, I am especially grateful to the Gray Herbarium Library of Harvard University for permission to publish the photograph of Edward Hoar and the texts of two Hoar letters.

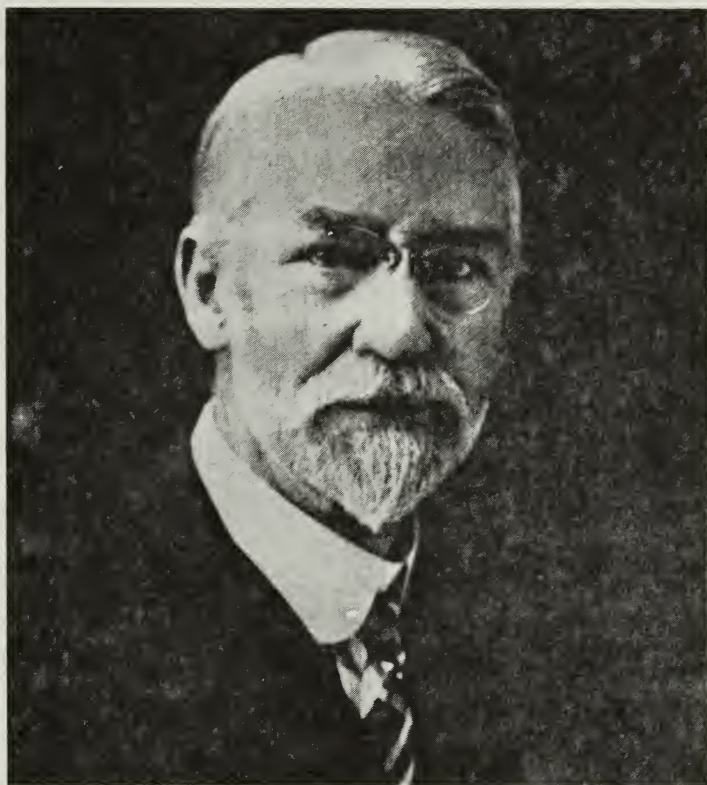
Endnotes

1. Ray Angelo, "Two Thoreau Letters at Harvard," The Thoreau Society Bulletin, 162 (Winter, 1983), 1-2.
2. Ralph L. Rusk, ed., The Letters of Ralph Waldo Emerson (New York, 1939), vol. 5, p. 110.
3. Rusk, Letters, vol. 5, p. 409.
4. Moorfield Storey and Edward W. Emerson, Ebenezer Rockwood Hoar, A Memoir (Boston, 1911), p. 317.
5. Harrison Gray Otis Blake (1816-1898), teacher and a disciple of Thoreau.
6. Thoreau's signature given to Walter Deane was cut from the letter from Thoreau to H.G.O. Blake dated March 27, 1848, Thoreau's first letter to his disciple. The signature is now in Deane's papers at the Gray Herbarium Library of Harvard University. For the text of this letter see Walter Harding and Carl Bode, eds., The Correspondence of Henry David Thoreau (New York, 1958), pp. 214-217.
7. Eventually, Blake did forward Deane a manuscript letter from Thoreau, dated October 5, 1854, now among Deane's papers at the Gray Herbarium of Harvard University. See Harding and Bode, Correspondence, pp. 342-343.
8. The name "Scirpus eriophorum" corresponds to three species of Wool-grass (a type of sedge) in Concord (S. cyperinus, S. atrocinctus, S. longii).
9. Another name for the Assabet River.
10. This species is common in the Assabet River. A specimen collected by Deane in 1886 is in the New England Botanical Club Herbarium. Its common name is Water Club Rush.
11. William Brewster (1851-1919), ornithologist from whose diaries and journal October Farm was compiled.
12. Henry Augustus Purdie (1840-1911), ornithologist and botanist.

13. This swamp, known to Thoreau as Charles Miles Swamp or Ledum Swamp, harbored a number of botanical rarities.
14. Labrador Tea (Ledum groenlandicum).
15. Pale or Bog Laurel (Kalmia polifolia).
16. While this species does not seem to be represented in Thoreau's herbarium, there are about thirty references to it in Thoreau's Journal. Its common name is Bayonet Rush.
17. The scientific name for the Rush Family.
18. The scientific name for the Sedge Family.
19. This is plural for Carex, the largest genus of vascular plants in New England. They are a type of sedge.
20. This refers to the species now known as Juncus canadensis (Canada Rush).
21. The common name is Humped Bladderwort.
22. This name includes two modern species, Spiral Pondweed (Potamogeton spirillus) and Hair-like Pondweed (Potamogeton capillaceus).
23. The common name is Mapleleaf Viburnum.
24. Minot Pratt (1805-1878), horticulturist, who is known for his introduction of alien species to Concord.
25. The modern spelling is Sabatia stellaris (Sea Pink).
26. The modern name is Brasenia schreberi (Water Shield).
27. Martha Bartlett (1824-1890), daughter of Dr. Josiah Bartlett.
28. The modern spelling is Nelumbo lutea (American Lotus). This introduced water plant is now abundant at Great Meadows in Concord.
29. Thomas Morong (1927-1894), botanist, whose specialty was Pondweeds (Potamogeton).
30. The scientific name for Pondweeds.
31. This name best corresponds to Potamogeton epihydrus (Surface Pondweed).
32. The common name is Grass-leaved Pondweed.
33. Great Laurel or Rosebay.
34. Mt. Monadnock is in Jaffrey, New Hampshire. This reference might be to Little Monadnock near Fitzwilliam, N.H., where a state park has been established to preserve the Rhododendron maximum.
35. Storey and Emerson, Ebenezer Rockwood Hoar, p. 317.
36. Storey and Emerson, Ebenezer Rockwood Hoar, p. 317.
37. George Frisbie Hoar, Autobiography of Seventy Years, 2 vols. (New York, 1903).
38. Edward Sandford Burgess (1855-1928), botanist.
39. Manuscript letter from Edward S. Hoar to Edward S. Burgess, November 23, 1892, in Concord Free Public Library.
40. Manuscript notes of Edward S. Burgess, "Notes on Concord People," [1893], in Concord Free Public Library.

EDWARD S. HOAR'S CONVERSATIONS ON CONCORD WITH EDWARD S. BURGESS

by Marcia E. Moss



Edward S. Burgess

Edward Sandford Burgess has been found at last!

Several years ago I discovered in the Concord Library some manuscripts signed by E. S. Burgess. When I tried to find out who Burgess was, when he had visited Concord, and what connection he had had with the Concord Authors, no one seemed to know. Walter Harding published a small part of one of the manuscripts but said he could not identify Burgess. Recently, I decided that Burgess's notes had to be published, so full of information were they about Concord's famous people. Mrs. Elizabeth Maxfield-Miller made a research trip for me to the Houghton Library, Harvard University, where she found references to two Edward Burgesses. The more interesting prospect (1855-1928) had made a study of asters, which indicated that he had an interest in botany. But this Burgess lived in Washington, D.C.; there was no indication that he knew Concord.

When I did find out that this Burgess had known Amy Lowell, and had corresponded with her, I sought and found one of his letters. A comparison between this letter and the mysterious manuscripts in the Concord Library showed their handwritings to be the same. Edward Sandford Burgess had been found at last!

In the Concord Library archives I found also a letter from Edward S. Hoar (1823-1893) to an Edward S. Burgess in Washington, D.C. Hoar asked Burgess to find the Hoars inexpensive lodging in Washington so they might make a short visit to escape the cold. Hoar mentioned that he and Burgess had taken a boat trip on the Concord River some time ago. Further research reveals that Burgess had been to Concord in 1881 to attend the School of Philosophy in Hillside Chapel. He was at the opening session with Ralph Waldo Emerson, Amos Bronson Alcott, Louisa May Alcott, Edmund Clarence Stedman, Hiram K. Jones, William T. Harris, and Franklin B. Sanborn. Other letters show that Burgess stayed with the Brooks family on Main Street at Sudbury Road at this time.

The Hoars did go to Washington in late 1892 where they were visited frequently by the Burgesses. Edward Hoar, then sixty-nine, was quite ill. Burgess, then thirty-seven, recorded their conversations in shorthand. His notes are reproduced here for the first time in their entirety. In 1893 Mr. Hoar died in Washington, and Mrs. Hoar returned to Concord. When the Burgesses soon after visited Concord, Mrs. Hoar made arrangements for them to have a room at Mrs. Brooks's house again.

DR. EDWARD SANDFORD BURGESS was born in Little Valley, New York, January 19, 1855, the son of Reverend Chalon Burgess, a Presbyterian minister, and Emma Johnston Burgess. Edward Burgess graduated from State Normal School, Fredonia, New York, in 1875, from Hamilton College in 1879, and with an M.A. from Hamilton in 1882. He was a teacher of science all his life and was well known for his veracity. He was Head of the Botany Department in Central High School, Washington, D.C., from 1882 to 1896. He also instructed in botany at Johns Hopkins in 1885. From 1881 to 1895 he was Professor of Botany at Martha's Vineyard Summer Institute. He became Head of the Biological Sciences Department at Hunter College, New York, in 1895, and Acting President in 1908. Hunter awarded him an Honorary Doctorate in 1904. He was not only a scientist but had a deep appreciation of world literature and art. He was fond of poetry and helped Amy Lowell publish her poems and her work on Keats. Burgess married Irene S. Hamilton in 1884. He died in New York City, February 23, 1928. According to the National Cyclopedia of American Biography (Vol. 21, pp. 124-125), "He awakened in his students a love for the subjects which he taught and a permanent devotion to the truth."

A Note on the Text

Burgess's notes of his conversations with Hoar are written mostly in abbreviations and in a tiny handwriting which make deciphering difficult. In the following transcript most abbreviations are silently expanded and terminal punctuation supplied. Repeti-

tions of datelines at the heads of pages are omitted. Editorial clarifications appear in brackets; Burgess's own brackets are printed as parentheses. The order of the manuscript pages is problematical but for the most part has been decided by datelines and contiguous text.

THE CONVERSATIONS

Fr[om] Mr. E. Hoar, Dec. 30 [18]92

I have just finished reading Thoreau's *Winter*.¹ There is not so much natural history in it as in some other volumes, not so much as there is of matter addressed to man's moral nature.

I have greatly regretted that I did not know Thoreau better. Did you not often go out with him? [This was probably a question from Mr. Burgess.]

Yes, I did; I was one of the few to whom he granted that favor. I was shown that side of his nature to the full, the natural history side, the minute observer. But there were other sides to him, and I was wholly unaware then of the moral side that appears so strongly in his books. He did not show me that in our walks. Thoreau was intensely a moralist, to him everything was valuable according as it appealed to the moral sentiment and he would lose no opportunity to enforce a moral sentiment. Nor would he lose any opportunity for observing nature even if it was to get up in dark night and watch for hours the lightening around a rotten log in Maine.² He was ready to open that side of himself to any one who would pay the price. But that meant, to go with him in his walk; to walk long and far; to have wet feet, and go so for hours; to pull a boat all day; to come home late at night after many miles. If you would do that with him he would take you with him. If you flunked at anything he had no more use for you.

Thoreau was of a very fine-grained family. He knew he had not long to live and he determined to make the most of it. How to observe and acquire knowledge and secure the true objects of life without much expenditure of money was his great study. He would not wait as most men, to acquire a competence, before settling down to realize the ends of life. He would show how they could be secured without money; or with very little. This was the secret of his *Walden Pond*.³

Thoreau's family had a scrofulous tendency; his sister Sophia,⁴ a very fine-grained nature, died of consumption and so did his brother;⁵ he died in Thoreau's arms; and that nearly killed Henry.

Of Thoreau's companions, I was not the eldest. Ellery Channing⁶ was with him a great deal; was one year younger. Blake⁷ was another: the principal friend left. Blake has never written himself. His wife an invalid, his life has been filled with cares. Blake was with him a great deal, a dear friend of his.

Ellery Channing was the friend of Thoreau who was with him when he tramped up and down Cape Cod. I can see the two now, under their umbrella with the umbrella pointing into the north wind. They were just right for each other.

In Winter where Thoreau speaks of Miss Emerson he means Emerson's Aunt, Mary Moody Emerson.⁸ She was a singular character, a very intelligent woman, who wore a hood over her head and a long cloak falling down from her shoulders nearly to the ground; clad in this and supported by a long staff she roamed everywhere through the woods about Concord. She had no patience with talk on the surface; language with her must go to the depths of the thing.

Mr Ellery Channing gave to my sister Elizabeth⁹ his poems; he would come over to see her and give them to her; he used to spend a great deal of time with her. I have them now in my house, a row on a shelf, some 6 or so of them. After he came back from Italy, he published his prose volume *Conversations upon Italy*,¹⁰ the sanest of his works. He has also written some essays; one on Turner¹¹ I remember. Of all his ideals and early enthusiasms, that for Turner is the only one which I believe survives. He is full of admiration for him now. There is a Turner in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, in a sideroom with two Van Dycks and a Dürer.

Mr Ellery Channing has become so much soured by the neglect his poems received that it had turned him against them and now he destroys every copy he can, he tries to get hold of every copy possible and burn it. But there arent any copies.

I imagine in that old house there must be a good many poems of his loose lying scattered about yet that might be gotten together sometime.

I suppose in future time these men, Ellery Channing and Thoreau will be remembered perhaps more by some happy expression which is preserved in anthologies and so handed down on account of its being the delight of some particular mind. I imagine few will ever read through the whole of his long poems.

Ellery Channing had a friend Mr Marston Watson,¹² at Plymouth or near by, a gentleman of means, who had a beautiful and extensive place, which he converted into a nursery with all kinds of elegant shrubs. It is evidently this which is meant in Ellery Channing's the Hillside.¹³

Miss Caroline Sturges¹⁴ might perhaps be the one who is meant as saying: "O I would be a daughter of the sea!" She was daughter of a man in business at the port in Boston; she was very fond of rowing in the harbor and would row way out a long distance; it was in a day when no one else did so, no other ladies went rowing; she was fearless and free; every sailor in the harbor knew her.

"The Island" must be Clark's Island.¹⁵ He would go there with Mr Marston Watson often. The other island to which he would go was one in the Concord River, 7 or 8 miles down in Billerica.

(Of Miranda, Liza, Julia, I know O[nothing])¹⁶

It was Margaret Fuller¹⁷ who went with Ellery Channing to Monadnoc. Emerson did not go that time.

The chief place there of Ellery Channing's sojourn was at New Bedford with Daniel Ricketson the author of the *History of New Bedford*.¹⁸ Ricketson's son¹⁹ a young man has brought his wife recently to Concord and bought a house and built a studio and is now one of our sculptors. He has recently finished a bust of Louisa M. Alcott. He has not had the opportunities that Daniel Chester French²⁰ has had; has not had the foreign travel; but he has I

think more poetry in him; Daniel Chester French has more brilliancy and effect. Ellery Channing used to spend months at the Ricketson's father's house; but now they came to Concord, he met the Ricketsons on the street one day and would not speak to them; so now they don't speak to him.

The trouble with Ellery Channing was that when a young man not very wise and with no money, when out in Ohio writing for some paper once a week, he met a young sister²¹ of Margaret Fuller, only 18 and without a penny in the world, and right in the face of their parent's denial they must get married. Well, it was not to be wondered at that a Fuller and a Channing should not get along well together; both were so peculiar, though the Fullers were a coarser nature than the Channings; and yet he loved her very earnestly I think; when she died he spoke of it to me with tears in his eyes; though I believe he had separated from her some time before. His 2 sons,²² they took her part and wont see him; though they've offered to do something for his support. I don't suppose he really supported her. One son is a Professor in Harvard; the other, a Doctor, is an expert in insanity; there has been insanity in the family; and he has been insane and now recovered from it; there is a streak of it in Ellery Channing himself. One son, the Doctor was in Concord the other day and met my nephew and asked him where his father, Ellery Channing, lived; my nephew²³ said if the Doctor hadn't any more interest than that in his father, he wouldn't tell him, and he didn't.

Ponkawtasset Hill²⁴ where Ellery Channing lived twice, is a very slightly eminence, commanding a view of the river and its expanse toward Fairhaven Bay for miles. Annursnack and Nashawtuck are some distance away.

Daniel Ricketson was editor of a New Bedford paper, and Ellery Channing wrote for it awhile. Daniel Ricketson was an oldfashioned man and wrote a book about the whaling interests.

Emerson used to tell me Ellery Channing had a way of seeing things in nature truer than almost anybody else. He put some of Ellery Channing's poems in Parnassus.²⁵ Ellery Channing's Monadnoc is in it.

I would lend you my sister's copies of Ellery Channing's poems; but I could not give them to you for they are not mine to give.

Is your wife interested in music? The way I like to hear music is to sit by while someone plays who does not know there is any one present; or at least who is not playing to display herself but to render the music.

I am sorry I have not been able to pay a visit to your laboratory.²⁶ I have never had an opportunity to see much of that work done; except when in Garden of Plants Paris²⁷ where I saw 40 or 50 dissecting microscopes put into the hands of as many raw students untrained and of all classes and both sexes; one instructor or so looking on from behind to see they made no mistake.

I have been in Arizona and think of going there now.

Ellery Channing was a constant surprise in the unexpected ways his knowledge turned up; something would turn the conversation to it, or he would ask a simple question about it and first thing you knew, you would find he knew all about it. So at sometime he had made a study of Turner.

I could have become a good ornithologist. When I was young I was a good shot, could hit a bird on the wing at 200 yards. But when I became acquainted with Henry Thoreau he persuaded me out of it. He would never shoot a bird; and I think his method greatly preferable to that of Mr John Burroughs.²⁸ Thoreau would lie and watch the movements of a bird for hours, and so get the knowledge he wanted. He used to say that if you shot the bird you got only a dead bird anyway; you could make out a few parts in anatomy or plumage, just such as Dr. Coue's²⁹ work is; but you couldn't see how the bird lives and acts. Since then I have never shot a bird. I like Bradford Torrey's³⁰ writing very much; I like his Foot-path Way even better than his Rambler's Lease; he is quite a botanist too; he says he is going to foreswear birds but his Foot-path Way shows he can't. I've had some correspondence with him.

I have found an English writer on Nature who pleases me very much; the "Son of the Marshes",³¹ and he is living now, in Kent, lives by a trade as tinner I think; I don't know his name; my brother brought me his books from England, all but his Annals of a Fishing-Village which I want to read next. I think him a better writer than Richard Jefferies;³² he has a better eye, there's nothing escapes him; and he has a style and use of language that no college professor of Rhetoric could have given him; it is nothing but Nature. I think Thoreau has suffered in his editing; I think many things have been published which should not have been, notes and hints intended to guide himself in the future observances which were of no use to the public. There is a black ash in Concord on Fairhaven Bay in a deep hollow; Thoreau told me it was the only one in town; and so I have always believed it; it is a pistillate tree, usually with infertile fruit; but once in a certain number of years it bears fertile fruit. I think it produces stamens also those years; 2 years ago it bore fruit and I saved a quantity of them and they came up and I have now quite a crop of those black ashes in my gardens.

The fringe tree we use all along the River to line its banks; it is very beautiful with its broad and shapely lines.

Mr. Sanborn is now in Greece and Constantinople; sends letters home as foreign correspondent; leaving his wife to the care of E. Channing. I have Ellery Channing's Near Home.³³ Ellery Channing has a wonderful keenness for beauties of Nature. I think his "Monadnoc" is better than Emerson's Monadnoc. He and his family all have a certain tinge of eccentricity almost insanity; I don't know whether they got it from the Channing or the Perkins family; their mother's; either one would account for it. Ellery Channing's uncle Perkins³⁴ was his professor of Rhetoric in Harvard; and when Ellery Channing's first volume of poems came out, he threw it down on the floor on looking into it saying: "I never thought a Channing would have been such a dam'd fool." finding some laws of Rhetoric violated; neither a Perkins nor a Channing ever stopped a moment to consider what they said. But there is one of Ellery Channing's which is free of any trace of this insanity; it is his Conversations at Rome between 3 persons in dialogues descriptive of his journey there. Ellery Channing used to walk with Emerson a great deal; Emerson used to say there was no one had so keen an eye for the beauties of

Nature as Channing; and with Thoreau; but now he wont read Thoreau's books; when the new volumes on Summer, Winter etc. had been sent to him he wont take it out of its wrapper but just throws it down unopened. Why? simply because he does just according to his mood. It has always been so. There were 6 years that he used to come to my house regularly once a week to take tea; and all of a sudden he left off coming and never came again without any reason or difference between us, it was simply his mood. (Ellery Channing was very sick a year or more ago; they thought he couldn't live but a little while; his housekeepers left and the new ones wouldn't stay; Mr. Sanborn took him home with him, and he has stayed there ever since; has been there a year; he got well at once; all he needed was care and food; sometimes he would not taste the breakfast at Concord, would go in July to a Boston restaurant and eat O[nothing] till 11 or over or he would come around to Franklin B. Sanborn at tea and say he had eaten O[nothing] all day. Mrs. Hoar[:] I knew it would be so, knew he was always governed by his mood, and so I had expected some day he would go away from us, so I was not disappointed.

I have been fortunate in seeing a great many great men because they came to Concord on account of Hawthorne and Emerson; so Herbert Spencer, Sir Wm. Hooker.³⁵

When at dinner in Concord once with Sir Wm Hooker at my brother Judge Hoar's, Sargent³⁶ and Gray being present they got into a hot dispute about *Quercus tinetoria*. Sargent claimed it was not distinct from *Coecinea*[scarlet oak]; Gray that it was a good species; they went out and collected acorns, and had quite a time over it; there was one time that Sargent and Gray didn't speak with each other; Gray's feeling that Sargent was sending[?] too much over to the Bussey Institute³⁷ that might too have gone to Botanical Gardens; but it didn't last long; (Gray was a man that) one couldn't quarrel long with; but Sargent has not his loveliness of disposition.

I have found a very interesting book in Kalm's Travels.³⁸

January 3, [18]93

to Miss Prichard

Mrs. Hoar says Mr. Burgess is fortunate man who is able to teach what he loves to teach.

Says Mr. Edward Hoar, Not like my friend Walter Deane,³⁹ who loves Botany but teaches Latin. And he is a fine Latin scholar too--I don't dare when in his presence to pronounce a Latin word lest he correct me. He is an authority on pronunciation. But I am not so sure but [space blank] was right who said that the newer ways of pronouncing Greek and Latin were no better than the old way, and if they could come back to us he would probably find our English sounds the nearest like his. At any rate it is I think a strange thing if the pronunciation can be restored to a dead language 1800 years after, and no mistake in it.

Your flowers are a very pleasant herald of your approach.

We were once a very simple quiet community in Concord. Later there came into it a number of persons who were of different order, who would be elated if Emerson spoke a word to them, would make a little speech over it themselves, and I don't think Emerson liked

it very well. Before we all felt on a level with each other; Emerson and we would talk together, just as anybody else. Then came some who thought that by drawing near to Emerson they could get strength and light from him; and so lived there. Hawthorne was wrongly supposed to be one of those. Hawthorne when spoken with on the subject said, My wife and I came to Concord and found we could be very happy here, and so we stayed here because we liked it. But it was more the place and its freedom from curiosity which pleased him. He could go along the street and nobody seemed to ask what he was going for. Nobody seemed to examine into how the other lived or what they were doing. Hawthorne and Emerson were really not intimate. Though friendly they never saw a great deal of each other. Hawthorne was not dependent on Emerson. He liked to go his own way alone.

Emerson was so very simple and unpretending he could not imagine any attention was made for him. When Ellen Emerson and her father came home from Europe, after his house burned, there was a reception made for him⁴⁰ and he thought it was for her he thought at first it was her Sunday School class come to meet her; the citizens all gathered at depot and escorted them home marching in double procession double so as not to look like a funeral. As they rode up to the house, Emerson turned to Ellen and said again They mean this for you, don't they? Then he went into the house; and in a minute more came out and addressed them. He was very much touched. I never saw him so much affected. It was a most fitting speech too.

Ellen did not care for paintings; when abroad she has no desire to go to galleries of Florence or Paris; only went with him and because of his wish, he took her hand in his to lead her through the Louvre, he was not willing that she should not see it.

Ellen never read her father's writings through till she was needed to help in his lectures, and in arranging them, when he would forget that he had already said a thing once. Emerson said, "I have a daughter who will not read her father's books". But she and her mother were both very proud of Mr. Emerson and his writings. Ellen is very religious; what are her chief tastes? the children and Sunday School; she is a Bible-Christian; and the Old Testament, she thinks there is nothing like it. She did not read her father's writings lest they do her harm. She is very much interested in the schools too, has the children to her house to interest them, etc.

(I think that it is essential to our life here that we keep the continual sense of the presence of a personal God, who watches over us and cares for us and loves us.) (and I suppose she feared she would lose that sense) But I think that was particularly true of Emerson of all men; it was just Emerson's view; and what he strove to impress on the world in his writings.

(And) Mr Hoar That one of the beatitudes which says Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God, always seems to me to mean Emerson. I believe if any man ever saw God he did, I believe he was always in his presence. His wondrous, perfect purity I think fitted him to perceive God's presence. I think because he was the purest of men he saw God about him.

Mrs. Hoar says I don't believe Emerson was ever tempted to do wrong. He always seemed to be and to do right naturally.

Mr. Hoar He felt that prayer was too sacred for formal repetition.

Mrs Hoar He used to go to church much more often the later years of his life; but I guess it was because Ellen made him.

Mr Hoar Oh no, I guess not. He was always glad to go for the sake of others. He knew how others needed the service.

Edith⁴¹ was unlike the rest in her life. She married into wealth and her life was more a life in the world. But she is very good and kind. She has 6 children, one daughter and 5 sons; one died. The oldest sons, 25 and 23, are entering on their professional studies, are about coming home from Germany. Her husband is William Forbes, the owner of the yachts. His brother is Malcolm M Forbes. Both have houses at Naushon, the island of their father not now living, Commodore M M Forbes, Sr. Another brother is Robert. There they live like old world lords on their baronial estate, send a yacht to bring a visitor to pass the night, and send him back in the yacht; have a deer hunt once a year to keep the deer from growing too many, etc.⁴²

Mr Hoar says I have planted the Scotch broom seeds brought from Naushon and none ever came up.

Jan 4 [18]93

Edward Emerson⁴³ came to see me a few days before I left Concord in September and said he was glad he had had the experience he had had as a doctor. He was not sorry he had been a Doctor. (I think I remember his saying to me that he was glad to know as their physician about everybody in Concord.) Yes that is the way he would view it. He liked to know people.

He has had I expect to fight for life these many years; he has much the same trouble Mr. Hoar has; he rides out every day to be in the open air as much as possible. He has a nice family of fine children. He is called on so much now to give lectures in the West, I don't know but he will find that his true vocation. After all it takes many years generally for a young man to find out what he was meant to do in this world.

He surprised us all in Concord when he wrote his father's life.⁴⁴ We didn't know he had it in him. I think he is even a better writer than painter.

Mrs. Emerson, Senior⁴⁵ died in November; she was 90 in September; it was rather a relief to us, and to Ellen and Edward; she was so unhappy; she had lost some of her faculties so long; her memory etc. She was not at all what one might expect for her husband. She was of such different type, but very educated[?] and agreeable, very bright and attractive. Her husband had a way of calling her Queenie; she was a few months older than he; He used to say, "A great many things I can't remember, but here's Queenie, she's 6 months older than I am and she can remember everything."

R W Emerson owned 30 acres at Walden Pond; Thoreau's house stood within it. Lately Sam Hoar⁴⁶ had to begin cutting down the timber, the pines, on his tract called Fairyland the other side of the road back of Emerson's, making part also of the Walden Woods, 80 acres; the trees were getting old and dying at the tops, and the land

worth 200 dollars an acre for its timber and he could not afford to lose it. When Ellen and Edith heard of it they couldn't think of having it so, and Edith bought the whole tract of him--she is--abundantly able. So now the Emersons have the whole. There is a small pond in it, too. Now the borders of Walden Pond are quite well secured; the Rail Road owns quite a share but it's to its interest to keep it nice and attractive, and a great many come out from the city to it.⁴⁷

R W Emerson I remember being on the cars with him and Professor Whitney⁴⁸ of Yale; and Professor Whitney plunged at once into discussion of Persian; immediately they began to talk over my head; (it was all beyond me, I couldn't follow them.) I think Emerson studied the Persian himself; every book in New England was at his service; and there were scholars in Oriental languages at Cambridge. The language and the idea in some of his translations from Hafiz⁴⁹ does not sound like Emerson's own thought. Emerson would repeat a great deal of Scott. When at Thoreau's funeral I heard him say in his remarks 'The essence in Thoreau's flower was not yet honey.'⁵⁰ I have since found the remark in Montaigne, whom Emerson read so much.⁵¹ I know that Emerson had Scott humming through his head a great deal; in his lines Soon as the summoning voice was still, I turned and looked on Hampshire's hill, that sounds exactly like Scott.

Mrs. Hoar (sounds like Ben Vorlich)

But there are other passages which do not sound so and yet I have since found one such subject that seems to be from Scott; it is in that famous poem Brahma; of the Red slayer; that famous line
I turn and pass and turn again,⁵²

I found since in Scott's, when the Knight of Snowdown was parting from Ellen,

He paused, and turned, and came again.⁵³

I have no doubt that had been in his mind and he had forgotten it; it was unconscious imitation (if so).

Of course in his remarks at the funeral, he couldn't have put quotation marks around it; but I saw it in print afterward with quotation marks.

Have you ever seen that tough and rugged old veteran Mr. Morong?⁵⁴ I can see him now adjusting his microscopes to his eyes; he had had them made in form of spectacles so he could examine water plants very conveniently.

I am afraid Concord is losing its attractions and its character as a river. When we had the prison come there we were sorry enough; but since have factories on both branches and the water has been malarious.⁵⁵

When I was a boy the Penobscot Indians from Maine would come here to Concord,--it seemed to be a favorite old haunt of theirs; they would start out in their canoes and come along the coast outside of the point[?], and up the Merrimac and then the Concord River; they would carry their boats around Lowell; then they would come to Concord and put up a little shelter of bark in the form of a round cone; they had no tents; they would sell those and fragrant baskets they make.

Walter Deane was curious to know what grass they used, he couldn't make it out, but went down in Maine and found it was Hierochloa.

The Doctor comes very near to a family. He is with them every day, through sickness, and he comes a great deal nearer than a minister. A minister cannot come so near.

Mrs. Hoar That depends on the man, on what kind of a man he is.

Mr. Hoar Fortunately, a kind Providence has arranged it so that there are many ways by which Truth can enter into the soul; and we are all a good deal like that little girl who was deaf and dumb, and blind; if we can only get into a condition to let the light in we are doing very well.

Carlyle said of Emerson that he was a man who had his window open toward Heaven.⁵⁶

It seems that a man can sometimes get nearer to people through his books than in any other way.

My daughter is Florence, her child Alice from her ancestor Alice Bradford. The Bradfords live in Providence. They are distantly related to Rev. Samuel Bradford.⁵⁷

Mrs. Ralph Waldo Emerson has none of her family now in Plymouth; they went south to North Carolina or South Carolina from there.

Charles Emerson had a collegemate Jackson of another family, son of Dr Jackson the famous Boston physician.⁵⁸

Thoreau's brother John was of practical rather than literary bent. Singular, it is, that there is so little of him in Henry's book Week on Concord when he too was bred in our schools and had the same adventures Henry had. He was frightened to death. He cut his finger and lockjaw followed and Henry held him in his arms when he died. Henry told me for 2 or 3 days after that he felt the lock-jaw tightening on him too--so great was his sympathy.⁵⁹

Henry was very affectionate; he had a great deal of sympathy that people did not know; during his last illness he received a great deal of attention and people were constantly coming and sending him flowers. He came to feel very differently toward people, and said if he had known he wouldn't have been so offish. He had got into his head before that people didn't mean what they said.

I, said Mr Hoar, once took my boat and sail and went down the river to Billerica dam, and found some boys on the dam and got them to carry my boat around, and then went down some miles to Lowell; when I was coming near Lowell some one called out to me from the shore, "You'll be under the millwheel in a few minutes if you don't look out". That is as near as we ever go, (and a little more and I would find myself under the millwheel). So I drew out to shore; and tried to get carried around so as to go down the Merrimac to Lawrence but the man had some work today getting in his hay; it was day after the 4th of July and he had put off his work day before and couldn't longer. So I didn't go on.

Jan 7

Mr Ralph Waldo Emerson continued to walk out and roam the woods and fields alone increasingly to the end.⁶⁰ He became more restless as he grew older, his mind failed. Some, as Judge Keyes, began to feel a little uneasy lest he get run over on the Railroad tracks. But others said, he had always shown plenty of intelligence in his walks and he could safely be trusted alone; and he was.

Mrs. Judge Hoar was a Brooks and came from Lincoln.⁶¹ We used to know them when we lived in Lincoln, once. (Mrs. Edward Hoar).

Caroline Hoar's (Mrs. Judge Hoar) niece is Mrs. M C Robbins of Hingham.⁶² Her husband is a Doctor getting into practice there. She began to write her sketches, "How We Renewed an Old Place" partly because they needed the money. I suppose she is over 40 or perhaps 50. She was one of that large number of New England women who could write well if they needed to; had the principle if there had been anything to call it forth. Caroline Hoar could have written too; she had it in her.

Sherman Hoar⁶³ the Representative son of Judge Hoar is very attractive. His first wife he loved devotedly, a loved girl who died in giving birth to her babe; while he was courting his second wife he was mourning the first; he missed her so much he must have her place filled; he is so winning, so attractive there was no girl but would be glad to have him; he recently brought her, his 2nd wife, to the Washington that his 1st wife had been planning and hoping to see.

Mrs. Elizabeth Hoar says Edward Hoar and I grew up together, we lived side by side;⁶⁴ we were near friends without marrying. Sister Fanny and another sister Miss Prichard have always lived in that house of my girlhood.

Mrs Dall,⁶⁵ a pushy woman, desiring to know celebrities, would visit us[,] she would stay a week. So my daughter went to her; and she wouldn't have her trunks upstairs.

Mr Ellery Channing does not seem to care for nature now; he has long ceased to walk out at all; all he does is to take the morning train for Boston, go to the Public Library and call for a large number of books, and get them around him, and sit there with his back to the rest of the people, and make notes all day.⁶⁶ Then late in the day he will return home.

Mr William Torrey Harris⁶⁷ said "I was impressed and surprised with your work in Botany. I made special mention of it in my report." He made most beautiful remarks at the funeral of Mr Sanborn's son who committed suicide (in a time of temporary insanity).⁶⁸ It was a peculiarly sad affair. Mrs Sanborn was almost beside herself. Mr. Harris rose to a broader view of things and spoke so feelingly and with such sympathy that we have always thought more of him since. He still retains his place in Concord. Mrs. Harris and daughter will be there with him the coming summer.

Mr. Sanborn has two living sons,⁶⁹ both in Railroad business, one recently happily married and keeping house in a suburb of Chicago. He is not like his father, a man of social science, but is instead a man of society. He married a granddaughter of Mrs Kirkland⁷⁰ who in Illinois or the West wrote a book about the Home in those earlier days when it was a notable thing for a woman to write.

And she is represented in the picture the Authors of the United States.

Miss Louisa M Alcott wanted to withdraw her father from the Concord School of Philosophy some years before; she thought his mind was failing and it excited him; but Mr Sanborn didn't think so, couldn't see that his mind was affected.⁷¹

Endnotes

1. Winter (Boston, 1888), edited by H.G.O. Blake from Thoreau's manuscript Journal.
2. Edward Hoar accompanied Thoreau to the Maine woods in 1857. See "The Allegash and East Branch," The Maine Woods (Princeton, 1972), pp. 179-180, for Thoreau's description of foxfire or phosphorescent wood.
3. Walden; or, Life in the Woods (Boston, 1854).
4. Helen (1812-1849), Henry (1817-1862), and Sophia (1819-1876) all died of consumption.
5. John and Henry taught a private school in Concord from 1838 to 1841. John (1814-1842) showed symptoms of consumption before he died of lockjaw from a razor cut on his ring finger.
6. William Ellery Channing (1817-1901), Concord poet, Thoreau's frequent walking companion, author of Thoreau: The Poet-Naturalist (Boston, 1873). He was the son of Dr. Walter C. and Barbara Higginson Perkins Channing.
7. Harrison Gray Otis Blake (1816-1898), an admirer from Worcester who arranged Thoreau's lectures there. He was a Harvard graduate and a former Unitarian minister who began corresponding with Thoreau in 1848 and remained his close friend.
8. Mary Moody Emerson (1774-1865), the maiden aunt of Ralph Waldo Emerson. In Winter Thoreau writes of her: "Just spent a couple of hours (eight to ten) with Miss Mary Emerson at Holbrook's. The wittiest and most vivacious woman that I know, certainly that woman among my acquaintances whom it is most profitable to meet, the least frivolous, who will most surely provoke to good conversation and the expression of what is in you. She is singular among women at least, in being really and perseveringly interested to know what thinkers think." Cf. Thoreau's Journal (Boston, 1906), November 13, 1851, p. 114.
9. Elizabeth Hoar (1814-1878), daughter of Squire Samuel and Sarah Sherman Hoar. She was engaged to Charles Emerson who died before the marriage. His brother Ralph Waldo Emerson called Elizabeth "Sister" and "Elizabeth the Wise."
10. Conversations in Rome between an Artist, a Catholic, and a Critic (Boston, 1847).
11. Joseph M. W. Turner (1775-1851), English colorist whose works were studied and copied by the Concord artist May Alcott Nieriker (1840-1879).
12. Marston Watson, Plymouth horticulturalist, friend of Emerson, Thoreau, Alcott, and Channing. Watson supplied many of the shrubs and trees for Emerson's garden.
13. Hillside was the name of the Watson nursery and also a canto in Channing's poem The Wanderer (Boston, 1871), pp. 112-137.

14. Caroline Sturgis (1819-1888), daughter of a Boston merchant, was a friend of the Concord authors and married William Tappan. Frederick T. McGill, Jr., in Channing of Concord (New Brunswick, N.J., 1967), describes Caroline as "a child of whim and gypsy yearnings." One of Ellery Channing's stanzas about Caroline refers to her free spirit. The line "Oh, I would be a daughter of the sea!" is from "The Cape" in The Wanderer, p. 111.
15. "The Island" is a canto in The Wanderer, pp. 79-99, about Clark's Island in Plymouth, Massachusetts, named for John Clark, mate of the Mayflower.
16. Names in Channing's poems.
17. Sarah Margaret Fuller (1810-1850), editor of The Dial. In 1850 Margaret, her husband Count Ossoli, and their infant son were shipwrecked and drowned off Fire Island, New York.
18. Daniel Ricketson (1813-1898) of New Bedford wrote the History of New Bedford (1858) and contributed columns to a New Bedford newspaper for which Channing worked. Thoreau and Ricketson often visited each other.
19. Walton Ricketson (1839-1923) and his sister Anna came to Concord, bought a house, and had a studio near the river.
20. Daniel Chester French (1850-1931) studied abroad and sculpted, among other works, the Minute Man, John Harvard, and Abraham Lincoln's seated statue in Washington, D.C.
21. Ellen Fuller, who married Channing after a short romance in 1841, came back to Concord to live.
22. There were five Channing children: Margaret Fuller, b. 1844; Caroline Sturgis, b. 1846; Walter, b. 1849; Giovanni Eugene, b. 1853; Henry, b. 1856, whose name was changed to Edward Perkins.
23. This nephew may have been a son of Edward Hoar's brother, Judge Ebenezer Rockwood Hoar (1816-1895): Samuel or Charles.
24. The house on Ponkawtasset Hill was on Monument Street, and is no longer standing. Annursnack Hill is off Barrett's Mill Road in the northwestern part of town. Nashawtuck Hill is near the northwest extension of Thoreau Street.
25. Emerson compiled an anthology of poetry entitled Parnassus (Boston, 1874) which included eight of Channing's poems. "The Mountain" (pp. 6-7) is made up of excerpts from The Wanderer.
26. This laboratory was in the Central High School, Washington, D.C., where Burgess taught for many years.
27. Garden of Plants is Jardin des Plantes, a park in Paris, containing a beautiful botanical garden, a zoo, and a natural history museum. It was founded in 1626 and has a large collection of classified plant species.
28. John Burroughs (1837-1921), nature essayist, author of From the Back Country, Wake Robin, and other books widely read by botanists and ornithologists.
29. Elliott Coues (1842-1899), ornithologist, on the committee which prepared the Checklist of North American Birds (1886), author of Key to North American Birds (1872).
30. Bradford Torrey (1843-1912) wrote Rambler's Lease (1889) and Footpath Way (1892) and edited Thoreau's Journal (1906) with Francis Allen.

31. Sobriquet of Denham Jordan (1836-1920), author of Annals of a Fishing Village, Woodland, Moor and Stream, Being the Notes of a Naturalist.
32. Richard Jefferies (1848-1887), author of Round About a Great Estate and Field and Hedgerow.
33. Near Home. A Poem (Boston, 1858), dedicated to Thoreau.
34. Hoar probably means Edward Tyrrell Channing (not Perkins), professor of Rhetoric at Harvard. The book he disliked is Poems (Boston, 1843).
35. Herbert Spencer (1820-1903), philosopher, who attended the Concord School of Philosophy in 1881. Sir William Hooker (1785-1865), English botanist, who directed Kew Gardens, London; his son Sir Joseph Hooker (1817-1911) was a botanist who travelled throughout the United States collecting specimens.
36. Charles Sprague Sargent (1841-1927), American dendrologist. Asa Gray (1810-1888), American botanist, first director of the Arnold Arboretum.
37. Benjamin Bussey of Roxbury in 1835 left money to provide a school of agriculture and horticulture as a department of Harvard College. James Arnold gave more money in 1872 to establish an arboretum which would contain all the trees, shrubs, and herbaceous plants that could be grown in the open in West Roxbury.
38. Peter Kalm (1715-1779), Swedish botanist who travelled in North America. His natural history survey (1748-1751), which Thoreau also read, was published in three volumes (1753-1761).
39. Walter Deane (1848-1930), a highly respected amateur botanist.
40. Ellen (1839-1909), the elder daughter of Lidian and Ralph Waldo Emerson, taught dancing and sewing to the children who visited her at home. The fire was on July 24, 1872; the house was rebuilt for the return of Ellen and her father on May 27, 1873.
41. Edith Emerson (1841-1930), younger daughter of Ralph Waldo and Lidian Emerson, married William Hathaway Forbes (1840-1897) in 1865 and had eight children. His brother was John Malcolm Forbes (1847-1904) who married first Sarah Coffin Jones, second Rose Dabney. Amelia Forbes (1888-1979), daughter of J. M. Forbes, married Raymond Emerson (1886-1977), son of Dr. Edward Emerson. Naushon Island was bought by John Murray Forbes and others in 1843.
42. Recent guests to the island report that the deer hunt and the annual clearing of the brush still take place.
43. Edward Emerson (1844-1930), son of Ralph Waldo Emerson, a doctor in Concord until he broke his leg in an accident. He lectured occasionally. A collection of his writings was published by his son Raymond in 1930, Essays, Addresses and Poems.
44. Edward, who had pleased his father with his writing, impressed his townspeople with his Emerson in Concord (Boston, 1888) written for the Second Series of the Social Circle Memoirs.
45. Lidian Emerson (1802-1892), daughter of Charles and Lucy Jackson of Plymouth.
46. Samuel Hoar (1779-1856), who married Sarah Sherman, was the father of Elizabeth, Judge Ebenezer Rockwood, Sarah Sherman,

Edward Sherman, and George Frisbie Hoar. Squire Hoar was a very influential man in Concord.

47. The Fitchburg Railroad set up an amusement park at Walden Pond in 1866 to entice people of surrounding areas to take the trains to Concord. There were picnic areas, swings, a track, a pavillion, and a bridge across the tracks so the train could be boarded from the west side. It was a busy area, used by Sunday School picnickers and political groups, as well as boaters and swimmers. The park was abandoned in the early 1900s.
48. William Dwight Whitney (1827-1894), Yale professor from 1854 to 1894, a noted scholar of Sanskrit, Oriental, and Linguistic Studies, and an editor of the 1864 edition of Webster's Dictionary.
49. Hafiz, pseudonym of Shams ed-Din Muhammed (d. ca. 1388), mystic, and the greatest Persian lyrical poet.
50. Emerson had said of Thoreau's verses: "The gold does not yet run pure, is drossy and crude. The thyme and marjoram are not yet honey" ("Thoreau," Atlantic Monthly, August 1862).
51. Michel Eyquem de Montaigne (1533-1592), French essayist.
52. Emerson wrote in "Brahma" (1857):

If the red slayer thinks he slays,
Or if the slain think he is slain,
They know not well the subtle ways
I keep, and pass, and turn again.

53. This reference is to Sir Walter Scott's The Lady of the Lake, Canto 4, XVIII:

With hand upon forehead laid,
The conflict of his mind to shade,
A parting step or two he made;
Then, as some thought had crossed his brain,
He paused, and turned, and came again.

54. Reverend Thomas Morong (1827-1894), Curator of the Herbarium at Columbia College. (The Concord Free Public Library has a postcard from Morong to Alfred W. Hosmer, thanking Hosmer for some botanical specimens.)
55. The Massachusetts Correctional Institution was established at Concord in 1884. By 1892 there were several harness factories along the rivers and a large mill which made flannels, serge, and dress goods.
56. For the Emerson-Carlyle friendship see The Correspondence of Emerson and Carlyle, edited by Joseph Slater (New York, 1964).
57. Florence Hoar (1860-1946), only daughter of Edward and Elizabeth, born in Lincoln, Massachusetts, married Moses Brown Lockwood Bradford (1856-1928). They had one daughter Alice (b. 1886) who married John P. Bowditch (1883-1933).
58. Dr. Charles Jackson, Lidian Emerson's brother, was a discoverer of the use of ether as an anesthetic.

59. Joel Myerson, "More Apropos of John Thoreau," American Literature, Vol. XLV, No. 1 (March 1973), 104, writes: ". . . it was many weeks before Thoreau, who had briefly contracted a sympathetic case of lockjaw, could even begin writing in his journal again." Henry's illness began eleven days after John died on January 11, 1842.
60. Emerson had extended his walks a few weeks before his death on April 27, 1882. For an account of Emerson's last days, see Ralph L. Rusk, The Life of Ralph Waldo Emerson (New York, 1949), pp. 481-508.
61. Caroline Downes Brooks (1820-1892), daughter of Nathan Brooks and Caroline Downes of Concord. In 1840 she married Judge Ebenezer Rockwood Hoar, Edward's brother.
62. Mrs. Mary Caroline Pike, daughter of James S. and Charlotte Otis Grosvener Pike, married James Henry Robbins in 1881. She wrote short stories and poems and in 1892 published The Rescue of an Old Place.
63. Sherman Hoar (1860-1898) married first Caroline Prescott Wood; they had two children, Roger and Ellen. In 1892 Sherman Hoar married Mary Tolman Buttrick by whom he had Stedman Buttrick and Elizabeth Hoar.
64. Elizabeth Prichard Hoar, daughter of Moses and Jane Hallet Prichard of Main Street in Concord. Elizabeth and her sisters Amelia and Frances and her brother William had been Edward Hoar's near neighbors.
65. Mrs. Caroline Wells Healey Dall (1822-1912), lecturer and editor who modelled her career on Margaret Fuller. Mrs. Dall wrote Margaret and Her Friends (Boston, 1895).
66. Channing filled some thirty notebooks and a large Commonplace Book with reading notes during these excursions to the Boston Public Library. (The manuscripts are now at the Houghton Library, Harvard University.)
67. William Torrey Harris (1835-1909), philosopher and educator. In 1880 he moved to Concord to assist in running the School of Philosophy.
68. Thomas Parker Sanborn (1865-1889) was a journalist with the Springfield Republican.
69. Franklin Benjamin Sanborn's other sons were Francis, at Westfield, New Jersey, and Victor, at Chicago.
70. Mrs. Caroline M. Stansbury Kirkland (1801-1864) wrote A New Home--Who'll Follow? (1839) under the pseudonym of Mrs. Clavers.
71. F. B. Sanborn wrote in the Springfield Republican, November 24, 1882, concerning Alcott's recent apoplexy attack: "He has inquired of late concerning the next year's course of lectures [at the School of Philosophy], and indicates his wish to take part in it."

BREAK-IN AT REBECCA THOREAU'S

by Thomas Blanding

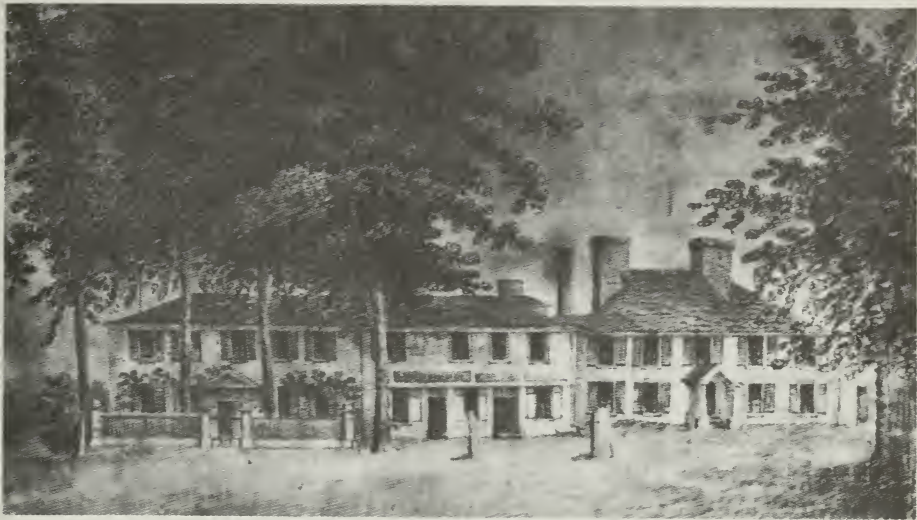
Marcia Moss, Thoreau Society Archivist, brings to our attention a dramatic document acquired this winter by the Concord Library, the "Records of Criminal Cases" tried at Concord from 1798 to 1823. Two case summaries for October 12, 1811, concern an armed burglary the preceding night at the Thoreaus' house on Central Square, now the northeast end of the Colonial Inn. We publish these accounts with the permission of the Concord Free Public Library.

The litigants and other principals in the case are:

Rebecca Kettel Thoreau, 47, widow of Jean Thoreau and stepmother to his eight children by his first wife, Jenny Burns. Since her merchant husband's death in 1801, Rebecca's fortunes have dwindled until her chief assets are the century-old house and the furniture in it. Her brother-in-law, Deacon John White, a widower, lives next door and keeps a general store; her brothers run a bakery in the Wright Tavern at the other end of the green. Though living in genteel poverty, suffering from severe rheumatism, and grieving over the recent death of her stepdaughter Mary,* Rebecca remains pious and uncomplaining. Her cherished stepchildren say she is without fault.

John Thoreau, 24, merchant, Rebecca's elder stepson, who learned his trade mainly as Deacon White's clerk. Coming of age in 1808, John had mortgaged his share of his father's estate to his stepmother and set up at the "Yellow Store" on Central Square, next to the Hill Burying Ground. Business prospered until he formed a partnership with Isaac Hurd, Jr., Rebecca's in-law by her first marriage. Last year, after their partnership dissolved in court, John went to Bangor with his brother-in-law, Caleb Billings, to sell goods to the Indians and others. John is now back in Concord, courting Cynthia Dunbar at her stepfather's farm on Virginia Road. The mortgage on the Thoreau estate has just been recorded but John is unable to repay the loan. Adding insult to injury, Joseph Hurd, Jean Thoreau's executor and the uncle of John's former partner, is draining the estate with self-serving fees. John is a hard-working, highly principled, if unassertive, young man who has suffered at the hands of less evenhanded associates.

*Standard sources give the year of Mary Thoreau's death as 1812. This is erroneous, as evidenced by her obituary in the Columbian Centinel for July 31, 1811: "In Concord, the 24th inst., Miss MARY THOREAU, daughter to the late Mr. John Thoreau, formerly of this town: By the sudden death of this amiable young lady, her family are deprived of an affectionate and beloved daughter and sister; her friends of a disinterested and pleasant associate, and the afflicted and the destitute of one who sympathized in their sorrows and delighted to relieve their wants. She early embraced these principles of religion which regulate the heart and elevate the mind; and which gave energy and action to her benevolence during life, and brightened with tranquil hope the hour of her death."



*Rebecca Thoreau's House (Right) as It Appeared in the
Early Nineteenth Century*



*Central Square, Concord, from the Thoreaus' Doorstep
About Thirty Years After the Burglary*

Abiel Heywood, 52, Harvard Class of 1781, has practiced medicine in Concord since 1790 and served as Town Clerk, Chairman of the Board of Selectmen, and Assessor of Taxes since 1796. He was commissioned a Justice of the Peace in 1797, an Associate Justice of the Court of Sessions in 1800, and a Special Justice of the Court of Common Pleas in 1802. He cries the marriage banns on Sundays at church, yet is himself still an eligible bachelor, living with his brother Asa on Walden Road. Doctor Heywood and Reverend Ripley are the last men in Concord to wear the old-fashioned knee-breeches, or small clothes. Generally every Saturday the doctor holds a justice court for the trial of small suits and petty crimes and, with dignified appearance and demeanor, exhibits a great degree of firmness and integrity in his office.

John Leighton Tuttle, 37, Harvard Class of 1796, lawyer, post-master, Middlesex County Treasurer, and Senator to the Massachusetts Legislature. He is well respected for his kind and affectionate disposition and reknowned for his great wit. His common expression is, "Mankind is a damned rascal!"

Tilly Buttrick, 57, keeper of the "Jail Tavern" (later the site of the Middlesex Hotel). His son, Tilly Buttrick, Jr., is one of the Concord constables. West of the tavern, set back from the street, is the three-story jail built in 1788-89. It is sixty-five by thirty-two feet, with eighteen apartments, two-foot thick walls, and a surrounding stockade of twelve-foot posts sharpened at the top.

Samuel Adams, ? , sometime laborer, sometime lunatic.

THE DOCUMENTS

Middlesex Js. At a Court held before us the Abiel Heywood & John L. Tuttle, Esquires, two of the justices of the Peace for the said county of Middlesex, at the dwelling house of Tilly Buttrick, innholder in Concord in said county on Saturday the twelfth day of October A.D. 1811--

Samuel Adams, cormorant of Concord aforesaid, is brought before us the subscribers, two of the justices of the Peace for the said county of Middlesex, Quorum Unus, by Tilly Buttrick jun. one of the Constables of the said town of Concord, by virtue of a warrant issued by us, dated October 12, 1811. on the Complaint of John Thoreau, on oath, of Concord aforesaid, Merchant, for that the Samuel Adams on the eleventh-day of October instant, the dwelling house of Rebecca Thoreau of said Concord, widow, of said Concord, in the night time of said eleventh day of October, with force and arms, burglariously & feloniously did break & enter with an intent the goods & chattels of her the said Rebecca, feloniously to steal, & carry away--

Whereupon the said Samuel Adams being put to answer the charge contained in the above complaint, whether he be Guilty or not, replies & pleads not guilty--and after the examination of sundry witnesses duly sworn to testify the truth relative the above charge against him; it appears to us that he did break & enter the house of the said Rebecca, as aforesaid; but that he the said Adams being an insane person & not a proper object of punishment is discharged--

In testimony whereof we have herunto set our hands the day and year
above written

Abiel Heywood

} Justices of
the Peace,
} Quorum Unus

* * * * *

Middlesex Js. At a Court held before us Abiel Heywood & John L.
Tuttle, Esquires, two of the justices of the peace within & for said
county of Middlesex at the dwelling house of Tilly Buttrick, inn-
holder in Concord in said county on Saturday the 12th. day of October.
A.D. 1811.

Samuel Adams, cormorant in Concord, in the county of Middlesex,
laborer, is brought before us, the subscribers, two of the justices
of the peace for the said county of Middlesex, Quorum Unus, by Tilly
Buttrick, one of the Constables of the said town of Concord, by vir-
tue of a warrant issued by us, dated October 12. 1811--on Complaint,
on oath, of John Thoreau of said Concord, merchant, that the said
Samuel Adams has become a Lunatick, and so furiously mad as to render
it dangerous to the good people of this Commonwealth for him the said
Adams to go at large, &c

And upon the examination of sundry persons, under oath to testify the
truth, and upon the examination of the said Adams, it appears to us
the subscribers, the said Justices, that the Complaint is supported--

Thereupon it is ordered by us, the said justices, that the Samuel
Adams be committed to the house of correction in Concord in said
county of Middlesex, there to be detained until he shall be restored
to his right mind, or otherwise discharged by order of Law--

In testimony of which sentence or order we have hereunto set our hands,
the day and year first above written--

Abiel Heywood

The said Adams }
was committed }

} Justices of the
Peace,
} Quorum Unus

WALTON RICKETSON'S FIRST BUST OF THOREAU: A LOST LIKENESS

by Thomas Blanding

In A Thoreau Iconography Walter Harding and I, commenting on the bust of Thoreau Walton Ricketson sculpted in 1898, wrote: "As early as 1878, Walton may have conceived or even modeled a bust of Thoreau, but twenty years passed before his project saw fruition."¹ We based our conjecture on a remark Bronson Alcott made in a letter of April 28, 1878, to A. H. Dooley, a librarian and Thoreau enthusiast at Terre Haute, Indiana: "A young desciple of his named Walton Ricketson of New Bedford has moulded a bust of him. But this I have not seen."² Just four days earlier Alcott had written Daniel Ricketson, Thoreau's friend, inquiring "about that bust of Thoreau moulded by your son Walton."³ But no such bust had survived to reproduce in A Thoreau Iconography, and it even seemed likely, lacking any other record of the work, that Alcott referred inaccurately to Ricketson's medallion head of Thoreau which sold commercially in 1879.⁴

Two letters Walton Ricketson wrote to Dooley, however, confirm the existence of an earlier bust and clearly distinguish it from the medallion head.⁵ Unfortunately, the bust itself has not surfaced and perhaps has not survived. Ricketson did use a studio photograph for advertising purposes, which may yet come to light, and he may have sold copies of the bust commercially. This work, sculpted some years after Thoreau's death in 1862 but before the mid-1870s when Ricketson showed it to Sanborn, would be our earliest likeness of Thoreau made from memory, and, unlike the 1898 bust, would show him with the full beard he wore in his last years.

New Bedford

May 5th. 1878

Mr A. H. Dooley

My Dear Sir

Your favor of the second inst. came to hand yesterday. In replying to your inquiries I will endeavor to give you some idea of the bust I have made of Thoreau and the circumstance by which I was influenced. I had the acquaintance of Mr T for some eight years during which time he made visits at our house⁶ and I also visited him at his home in Concord. He was not so much my guest at New-Bedford as my Fathers but kindred tastes and a high appreciation of his character and genius caused me to look up to him as one of the most remarkable men of our time.

Some years after his death I became interested in sculpture and after making some successful portraits both in medallion and full bust felt very desirous of attempting a bust of our friend. In doing this my first wish was to if possible express the noblest traits of

his character, his strong individuality--intellect and perhaps most of all and which impressed me most his transcendent philosophy. In trying to gain these points I omitted as much as possible minor details and strove to make a head indicative of a noble deep thinking original man. Whether I succeeded is not for me to say as under the circumstances I can only judge for myself. Mr F. B. Sanborn of Concord saw it a few years ago but looking for a likeness of Thoreau the Poet I fear was not satisfied. Most people get their idea of him from Rowse's Crayon Portrait which to me is not like the man I knew[,] too much of the indoor student delicate and sensitive, not suggestive of a man inured to storms, and the friend alike of the wood-chopper and the wood-chuck.⁷ The only really reliable likeness I had to help me in my work was an ambrotype taken here about a year before he died,⁸ a most admirable picture, representing him with a full beard which he wore during his latter years and by which his face was much improved, adding both grace and dignity. This and the remembrance of him and a hasty pen and ink profile by my father⁹ were my materials. Could I only have had a mask from his face after death it would have been of incalculable value to me.--

I have to day enjoyed a photo. print of a view in my studio in which the bust is the most important object and will send it to you as soon as possible-- If after seeing the photo. you should like a copy of the bust I will furnish one for \$25.00

Hoping the photo may meet your approval

I am very truly Yrs

Walton Ricketson

*

*

*

*

Studio Build'g

No. 42.

Boston Mass

Oct. 23d 1879--

My dear Sir

In looking over some letters to day I found a postal from you (sent May last) making inquiries about my Thoreau. Since answering your favor I have finished a medallion portrait life size of the Poet Naturalist of Concord which has met with the approval of the Concord Philosophers Mr R. W. Emerson doing me the honor of purchasing the first copy. Mr F. B. Sanborn has another copy and I am to send one to a Lady in Indianapolis in your state.¹⁰ The press has been very complimentary in noticing the portrait and say it is the best that has been made of him.

The copies are in fine plaster finished in such a manner as to be washable, and are \$25.00 with velvet frame or \$20.00 without frame. I also have some very fine photographs of the same by H. G. Smith of Boston for \$1.00 Each.

To those who knew Thoreau and had the privilege of listening to his rare conversation and feeling the influence of his philosophy, it is very gratifying to find him read and appreciated so widely. Not only is he read at the west but of late his writings have found an appreciative circle of readers in England. By the way have you seen the little volume by Page (the English writer) on Thoreau,¹¹ I think you would be pleased with the frank honest scholarly manner in which he treats his subject.

Please excuse me for being so lengthy in my talk, my only excuse is that the subject was for many years a dear and highly prized friend, whose memory awakens all that is true and noble in humanity, and whose influence on the coming generations is destined to be of great advantage.

I am My dear Sir

A. H. Dooley Esq.

Very truly yours,

Walton Ricketson

Endnotes

1. Thomas Blanding and Walter Harding, "A Thoreau Iconography," Studies in the American Renaissance 1980, p. 23. Also published as Thoreau Society Booklet 30.
2. The Letters of A. Bronson Alcott, ed. Richard L. Herrnsstadt (Ames, Iowa, 1969), p. 720.
3. Daniel Ricketson and His Friends, ed. Anna and Walton Ricketson (Boston, 1902), p. 201. The text of this letter of April 24, 1878, in Herrnsstadt, Letters, pp. 719-720, apparently an inexact copy or draft retained by Alcott, does not include the reference to Walton's bust of Thoreau, drawn here from the recipient's copy.
4. See Blanding and Harding, "Iconography," pp. 23, 25, 27.
5. Abernethy Collection, Middlebury College Library, published with permission.
6. Thoreau first visited the Ricketsons in New Bedford in December 1854.
7. The crayon portrait drawn by Samuel Worcester Rowse in 1854, now in the Concord Free Public Library. The Rowse crayon was the only published likeness of Thoreau for almost two decades after his death. See Blanding and Harding, "Iconography," pp. 1-4.
8. The Dunshee ambrotype of Thoreau, taken at New Bedford on August 21, 1861. See Blanding and Harding, "Iconography," pp. 20-23.
9. It is uncertain which of Daniel Ricketson's sketches Walton used as a model. Since he identifies the medium as "pen and ink," he may refer to the drawing dated December 26, 1854. See Blanding and Harding, "Iconography," p. 9.

10. Sanborn announced Emerson's purchase of a copy in "Our Boston Literary Letter," Springfield Republican, September 23, 1879, p. 3. Sanborn himself kept the preliminary cast Ricketson had carried to Concord for the criticisms of Thoreau's friends; after Ricketson had slightly altered the work, he asked Sanborn to destroy the copy, but he did not. The Indianapolis purchaser may have been Miss N. Cropsey or Miss Nicholson who were attending the Concord School of Philosophy when Ricketson unveiled the medallion head there on August 9, 1879.
11. Alexander H. Japp (H.A. Page, pseudonym), Thoreau: His Life and Aims (Boston, 1877, and London, 1878).

LOUISA MAY ALCOTT ON CONCORD:
A NEW "TRIBULATION PERIWINKLE" LETTER

by Joel Myerson

Of Louisa May Alcott's many pseudonyms, perhaps that of Nurse Tribulation Periwinkle, used for a series of letters later collected as Hospital Sketches, is her most famous. One hitherto unrecorded letter she wrote under that pseudonym appeared in the May 5, 1869, Springfield Republican (p. 2, cols. 4-5), and contains a satiric portrait of Concord well worth reprinting.

In the spring of 1869, Louisa, who had just published the first part of Little Women, found herself a member of the circle of Concord celebrities who were lionized, and whose homes became regular stopping places for visitors to Concord. Louisa did not much like this kind of visibility, often answering her door posing as a maid to tell visitors that Miss Alcott was not at home, and this letter shows her satiric response to the attention being paid her and her fellow Concord writers.

While I have been unable to find anything by Louisa acknowledging her authorship of this letter, the evidence for her writing it is strong: In 1869, F. B. Sanborn, a friend of long standing, was associated with the Springfield Republican; a clipping of this letter appears in Bronson Alcott's Journal for 1869 (p. 384, and again in his "Autobiographical Collections" for this period, p. 162; both in the Houghton Library); and, finally, it seems unlikely that anyone would use this famous pseudonym except the person who originated it.

Nurse Tribulation Periwinkle's letter appears below exactly as it was printed in the Springfield Republican. Astute readers will note the many sly references in the second paragraph to famous works by Louisa's Concord contemporaries, particularly Emerson and Thoreau.

LATEST NEWS FROM CONCORD

Nurse Periwinkle Frees Her Mind.

To the Editor of The Republican:--

"The Titan minds his own affair."

Emerson

As it has become the fashion to make a yearly report of the condition of Concord and its inhabitants, and as no gossip concerning this immortal town seems to be considered too trivial for the public ear, we feel it our duty to add to said yearly report lately published, the last rumor afloat.

It is said that a new hotel is about to be established, called "The Sphinx's Head," where pilgrims to this modern Mecca can be entertained in the most hospitable and appropriate style. Walden water, aesthetic tea, and "wine that never grew in the belly of the grape" will constantly be on tap for the refreshment of thirsty guests. Wild apples by the bushel, orphic acorns by the peck, and Hawthorne's pumpkins, in the shape of pies, will be furnished at philosophic prices. The house will be filled with Alcott's rustic furniture, the beds made of Thoreau's pine boughs, and the sacred fires fed from the Emersonian wood-pile. Boats for the week on the Concord River will always be in readiness to waft the eager pilgrim over the reposeful stream, whose proper name is Mosquitoid. Telescopes will be provided for the gifted eyes which desire to watch the soarings of the Oversoul, when visible, and lassoes with which the expert may catch untamed hermits, or poets on the wing. Samples of Autumn Tints, Mosses from the Manse, Rhodora, and herbs from The Garden, will be supplied gratis; also photographs of the faces divine which have conferred immortality upon one of the dullest little towns in Massachusetts.

Guides will be in attendance to show the most famous portions of the glorified sand-bank, and a daily bulletin will appear telling the most favorable hours for beholding the various lions--something in this style, perhaps:--

"Emerson will walk at 4 p.m.

"Alcott will converse from 8 a.m. till 11 p.m.

"Channing may be seen with the naked eye at sunset.

"The new Hermit will grind his meal at noon, precisely.

"The ladies of Concord will not be exhibited on Saturdays."

The need of an establishment like this has been long and deeply felt, especially since each spring brings, with the robins, a flock of reporters, who like the brisk and inquisitive birds, roost upon

Concordian fences, chirp on Concordian door-steps, and hop over Concordian hills and fields, scratching vigorously, as if hoping to unearth a new specimen from what is popularly believed to be the hot-bed of genius. If these early birds get no worms, it is not their fault, as the inhabitants of this much-enduring village will testify; the feminine portion, especially, for to them the words "private life," "sanctity of home," "domestic seclusion," are a hollow mockery during six months of the year.

Having been taught that home is a woman's proper sphere, and that publicity should be abhorrent to her delicate soul, the trials of these delicate ladies may be imagined, when they find themselves living in a lantern, as it were, illuminated by the radiance of their lords, and held up for the inspection of the public eye. There seems to be no mode of escape for them, no matter how willingly they would relinquish even the faintest ray of the reflected lustre, for they get booked whether they will or no. The servant of the public, or the ardent admirer, demands an interview with Jove or Hermes, lingers to see the god feed, and Juno must appear, regardless of inefficient Ganymedes, washing day, and crying babies. Diana steps into the garden en deshabelle to pick peas, and is startled by the appearance of a bland young gentleman, who, while asking his way to Norridge, takes mental notes and produces a pen and ink photograph of her, curl-papers and all.

Or Psyche, repairing to her rural bower, finds, not her Cupid, but an artistic stranger who tranquilly announces that he has "come to sketch the abode of genius," and proceeds to do it.

No spot is safe, no hour is sacred, and fame is beginning to be considered an expensive luxury by the Concordians. Their plaints are pathetic, though many of the performances behind the scenes are decidedly comic; for, following the examples of the Great Tormented, some of these haunted ones step out of the back window when the hunter enters the front door; others take refuge in the garret, while the more timid flee into the wilderness and do not emerge until a bell is rung to inform them that the peril is past. It is whispered that one irascible spinster, driven to frenzy by twenty-eight visitors in a week, proposed to get a garden engine and "play away" whenever a suspicious stranger was seen entering her gates. This bold idea was not accepted however, hospitality being one of the ruling passions of the Marthas who are in danger of sinking under the accumulated horrors of spring cleaning and spring visitors.

The plan of setting up a new hotel originated with these amiable ladies, and their first exercise of the elective franchise, will be to vote which of the philosophers shall open "The Sphinx's Head." We heartily wish them success, though we much fear that their patronage will exceed their profits.

Tribulation Periwinkle

Concord, May 4, 1869.



LOUISA MAY ALCOTT

*From the 1885 Medallion by Walton Ricketson,
the Frontispiece in Jo's Boys*

Dear Mr. Niles,--Sorry you don't like the bas-relief; I do. A portrait, if bright and comely, wouldn't be me, and if like me would disappoint the children; so we had better let them imagine "Aunt Jo young and beautiful, with her hair in two tails down her back," as the little girl said.

In haste, L.M.A.

To Thomas Niles, of Roberts Brothers, Publishers

Giving Walden to the World, 1921-22: Four Contemporary Reports

by Thomas Blanding

The campaign to preserve Walden Pond as a shrine to Thoreau is nothing new. Just four years after Thoreau died in 1862 a picnic station set up by the railroad tainted sunsets at the pond. Thoreau's admirers began a countermovement. Peace-seekers drew battle-lines against pleasure-seekers, and over the years thousands have gone forth to reconquer this Holy Land from the hands of the Infidels. In 1922 the crusaders won a major battle--theoretically at least--when Walden was made a State Reservation. Landowners Emerson, Keyes, Hayward, and Hoar gave their properties to the Commonwealth, and the Great and General Court of Massachusetts vested administrative control to the Middlesex County Commissioners. The following four Boston newspaper articles, three from 1921 when the petition failed and one from 1922 when it succeeded, show that some things never change. The Garden is still in a sorry State.

WALDEN A PUBLIC RESERVATION? (Boston Transcript, January 22, 1921)

Representative Moyses of Waltham has introduced in the Legislature a petition, accompanied by a bill, to make Lake Walden, the scene of Thoreau's famous experiment in the elimination of the superfluities of life, a public reservation, or State park. There are few people in the State in general who would not like to see this done. When all is said, Walden is the most famous lake that we have in Massachusetts. Even Spot Pond, which figures in our earliest relations, or Billington Sea, celebrated in the annals of the Pilgrim Fathers, yields to Walden in world-wide fame. Thoreau's great book, "Walden," has been translated into every literary language of Europe. Millions who have never seen the lake, and never will see it, have sat by its shores in imagination, and have pondered deeply on the social philosophy and life schemes of the man who built his cabin by the waters of the lake in 1845; and the pyramid of stones which the hands of many thousands of visitors have erected near the site of Thoreau's little house includes the contributions of men from every part of the world.

But this cairn, so simply and spontaneously raised to Thoreau's memory on the scene of his meditations, stands on private land. If the owner chooses, presumably he can cart the stones all away tomorrow, using them to fill up a hollow or to make the highway, and may plow up the ground where the memorial stands. Worse even than this circumstance, the shores of Walden have, it is said, through the perversion of private ownership, been given over to scenes of disorder and rowdiness. Little Concord is unable to protect them from this abuse, for fellows of the baser sort from neighboring large cities are dumped regularly upon the shores, upon the glassy surface,

and even into the pelucid waters, of Walden. In short, the little lake made sacred by Thoreau's residence and speculations on its shores is constantly and sadly desecrated. One of the purposes of Representative Moyses's bill is to redeem it from this condition by making it a reservation of the State, and guarding and caring for it as such.

Manifestly the reservation of the shores of the lake for this purpose would not interfere with the use of it for public diversion. On the contrary, it would further that purpose by wisely regulating it. Presumably the question of the public need of such a point of recreation will be the prime matter of consideration, before the Legislature, with regard to Representative Moyses's proposition. That it should be an appropriate matter for the State of Massachusetts to reserve Walden Pond purely as a memorial to Henry D. Thoreau will probably not impress the majority of our legislators. A prophet is not without honor save in his own country. In Europe, Thoreau is classed with Emerson, Mark Twain, Edgar A. Poe and Walt Whitman as one of the four really original thinkers and writers that America has produced. Abroad, his fame vastly over-shadows that of most of the great men to whom we have reared memorials. He is eminently worthy of the appropriate honor of the perpetual reservation of Walden in his memory. But the public interest in the question--the good of the little lake for public rest and recreation purposes--will probably have to preponderate. And as to this, it is only to be said that any sizable park lake that we now possess is an inestimable blessing--and we have not many of them.

OPPOSE STATE TAKING LAND AT WALDEN POND

Residents of Concord Deny It Is Scene of Rowdyism in Summer
(Boston Herald, February 3, 1921)

The project to have the state take over the land surrounding Walden pond, the little sheet of water in Concord which Henry D. Thoreau, the naturalist, made famous a half century ago, encountered strong opposition at a hearing before the legislative committee on conservation yesterday.

Representative Moyses of Waltham, the petitioner, said the grounds surrounding the pond need supervision because of rowdyism which takes place there now in the summer. Prescott F. Keyes, representing the Concord selectmen, and several other Concord residents, appeared in opposition, and denied that rowdyism exists at the pond.

WALDEN POND

(Boston Herald, February 4, 1921)

The present Legislature will have nothing to do with the proposition to make Walden pond in Concord a public memorial to Henry D. Thoreau. The proposition of Representative Moyses for such a

reservation has been referred to the next General Court. Perhaps no other than this action was possible, in view of the fact that the Concord people, including the descendants of those with whom Thoreau himself was most closely associated, are seemingly unanimous in their opposition to the plan. There is evidently a robust fear on the part of the Concord people that as a public park Walden would be over-crowded with visitors--that a swarming multitude from adjoining cities would desecrate its sacred precincts.

It is possible that, under official conditions, this fear is justified, although the ordinary state and condition of Walden's almost exact sister among the Massachusetts lakes, Jamaica Pond, does not justify the fear. Jamaica Pond is as beautiful today as it ever was; it is used in a manner which is very nearly ideal; its waters and its shores are today in much better condition than they were under private ownership; its romantic and poetic possibilities were never before so fully realized. It would seem to be possible to guard and use Walden in the same manner.

However, the Commonwealth cannot force memorial honor for its dead philosopher down Concord's throat, and probably does not wish to do so. For its own credit and for the love of Thoreau, however, Concord should see to it that the shores of Walden are not devoted either to vagrant rowdyism or to any form of commercial exploitation. Thoreau made the pond sacred in the eyes of millions of his countrymen. If not by public ownership, then by private solicitude, it should be kept secure against degradation.

Walden for Thoreau
(Boston Transcript, February 11, 1922)

Walden Pond is up again. Walden has become not merely a Massachusetts, but a national, question. The discussion, a year or more ago, of the proposition to make a State park of the waters and immediate shore of the little crystal bowl in the Concord woods, with the railroad track running along its side, had an instant echo throughout the country. Newspapers in Iowa, in Louisiana, in Missouri and in Oregon took up the theme with a keenness of interest that shamed the indifference of Massachusetts, and particularly the apparent unwillingness of Concord itself to make the place a shrine. These distant comments proved that in the hearts and souls of Americans Walden Pond already is a shrine. Out from among the tumultuous throng of the unregulated picnickers on the shores of the little lake, out, as it were, from behind the frowning icehouses, there seemed to step the gaunt and Indian-like figure of one of the greatest of American nature-lovers and philosophers--the figure of the man who put Walden Pond upon the map of the world as truly as Vasco Nunez de Balboa put upon it that somewhat larger and more restless body of water, the Pacific Ocean--asking us to make the neighborhood sacred.

It is now just sixty years since Henry David Thoreau, with the seeds of death in his body, went out on Concord paths once too often without his great-coat, and took the cold which ended his career. It

is seventy-seven years since he built his hut on the shore of Walden and made the scene immortal. From the vantage-ground of that hut, where he supported himself on nothing at all, or next to nothing, he taught the lesson of personal independence and of scorn of the superfluities and pretences of life which, though it has been slow in learning, the world is certainly beginning to take to heart. Even if the more than three-quarters of a century of Walden's propagandism have resulted in very few conversions to practical Waldenism, the story told from the cabin has at least arrested the imagination of the world. The author of "Walden," of "The Maine Woods," of "Cape Cod" is regarded by foreign critics as one of the half-dozen really great American authors. Not only do his works afford delight, but they greatly stimulate the surpassing love of out-of-door life which has become one of the saving characteristics of the American people.

Extremely little that is monumental has ever been done in Thoreau's memory. In Boston it is as if no such man ever existed. Concord has at least his ashes, and the simple old family gravestone, to remember him by. It does not seem to care whether it has also Walden or not. But if the people of Massachusetts remember their heroes, their sentiment should rise strongly to the support of the renewed proposition to dedicate Walden nobly to the fame and honor of a truly illustrious son. Surely time enough has elapsed since, amid the flowers of May, in 1862, Thoreau was carried to rest in Sleepy Hollow, to lead us to think of the one remembrance that would have pleased him best, if he could ever have dreamed of it--the dedication of little Walden pond to his perpetual memory.



CONCORD, MASS. THOREAU'S COVE — WALDEN POND.

H. L. Whitcomb, Concord, Mass.

GRAVE MATTERS

by Thomas Blanding

Thoreau's gravestone, smaller than a bread box and marked simply "HENRY," is one of the most familiar monuments in the necropolis of American literature. But this apt marker was not erected over Thoreau's remains until about 1890, when a relative, B. B. Thatcher of Bangor, Maine, set up new, uniform stones in the Thoreau family plot. There is, then, at least one stone still unturned.

What did Henry Thoreau's original gravestone look like? Nothing marked his grave for at least seventeen months after his burial in the New Burying Ground on May 9, 1862. We do not know if a monument was set up before Thoreau's remains were moved several years later to a new family lot on Pine Ridge, later Authors' Ridge, in Sleepy Hollow Cemetery. (The exact year of this transfer is unknown, but, as I have pointed out elsewhere [Concord Saunterer, Spring 1980, page 18], the evidence points to 1866.) Early pilgrims to the new site, just across a narrow foot-path from Hawthorne's grave, describe Thoreau's monument as a red-brown stone about three feet high inscribed with his name and his birth and death dates. A sketch of the Hawthorne lot drawn in 1871 by a Mr. Parsons for Harper's publications shows Thoreau's stone in the background, but details are indistinct. Even less helpful is the illustration of the "Graves of Hawthorne and Thoreau, Concord, Mass." by Louis K. Harlow in Haunts of Hawthorne (Boston, 1889).

Fortunately, Alfred Hosmer, Concord's own camera-chronicler, took a photograph of the Hawthorne grave which also shows Thoreau's stone in the background. The photograph was taken before 1888 when it was used as the basis for a drawing in Margaret Sidney's Old Concord: Her Highways and Byways. Hosmer's view appears in a photograph album, recently acquired by the Thoreau Lyceum, which Hosmer himself used to display his work to prospective purchasers. The progressive enlargements on our back cover bear mute but monumental testimony that Parsons's transcription of the inscription is inaccurate:

Parsons

H.D.
THOREAU

1817

1862

Hosmer

HENRY D. THOREAU
BORN JULY 12, 1817
DIED MAY 6, 1862



View of Thoreau's grave before 1888. The original photograph by Alfred Hosmer is at the top; the enlargements are courtesy of William Anderson. Thoreau's stone is in the center of the photograph, above Hawthorne's footstone.

